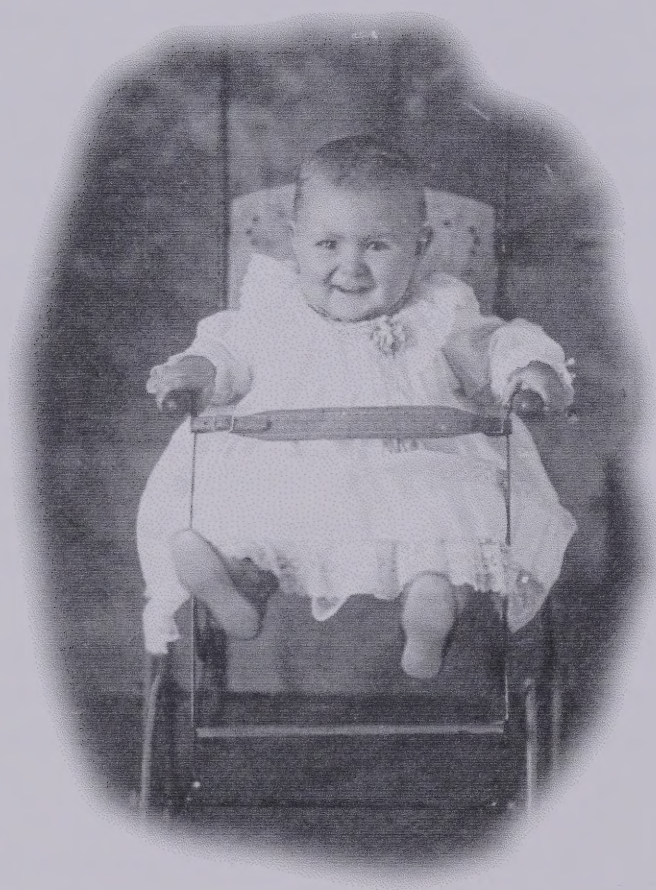


Frances Doll

1904-2000

AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
FRANCES HURSH DOLL

August 3, 1904 -- December 28, 2000



Preface

Have you ever heard of Hurshtown, Indiana? It was and is a very, very small village on the banks of the St. Joe River about 3 miles North of Leo, Indiana and about a city block south of State Road #1.

Hurshtown was started by and named for a family of Hursh's. A few houses, a grocery store, a saloon and a gristmill comprised the busy little spot on the map.

Ezriah Hursh, a son of Enoch Hursh, one of the founders, married Elizabeth Elbertie Oberholtzer of near Harlan in the summer of 1902. They set up housekeeping on the bank south of the river in the home which he was born. In July 1903 a daughter was born but did not survive. She was named Irene. Ezeriah, named for Uncle Ezriah Vanzile, and who he called dad, was called Eck by all that knew him and the uncle passed that on to him. The bride was known as "Bertie".

In the hot month of August 1904, on Sunday Aug. 3 while Eck was playing Baseball a baby daughter weighing 7 lbs. arrived in the old Hursh homestead. With Grandma Catherine Hursh there to do the honors of bathing new baby. Dr. Ben Shook was the attending M.D.

The new daddy arrived home with a broken nose and cheekbone. Dad tended bar in the local saloon and worked in the gristmill. All of this was told to me many times by my parents and grandma Hursh and Auntie Mollie Hursh.

I'm writing this starting March 28, 1994.

My Grandparents were:

Dad's side: Enoch Hursh and Catherine Van Zile.

Mom's Side: William Oberholtzer and Matilda Myers.

Bertie and Eck decided Hurshtown offered no future for them so in 1905 they purchased property in Grabill about one city block from the public square. With Baby Frances then 9 months old they moved to Grabill. There they opened a small hotel in their home and Bertie took in roomers and boarders. Eck had a livery barn. What's that? He offered a place to keep horses while people took the train to Ft. Wayne. Grabill was very proud to have the Wabash Railroad having a depot, stock yards and passing through the town making stops at New Haven and one country town, Thurman, on it's trip to Ft. Wayne. My dad also had two good driving horses, a good buggy, (single) a surrey with a fringe on the top and a large sleigh. He drove salesmen who came in on the train to various businesses around for several miles. He was an assistant rural mail carrier and worked at the Lumber Yard with Julius Gerig (Boss) and Chris Shank, a bachelor, who later married Rachel Witmer and moved across the street from the Hursh's. He had lived in the Hursh home.

I have pictures of myself taken at 9 months of age.

I'm smiling, my dimples are very prominent and I'm sitting in a new baby carriage. My dad very proudly told everyone "She walked at 9 months of age and talked before that and has never quit talking since, or asking questions." Gee Whiz! He hit the nail on the head but why not ask questions even though you often answer them yourself. This is a free country when it comes to speech so why not use that privilege. Anything I write here that occurs before 1907 was told to me but I have a memory, miles long and then some.

As a child I had one special girl friend whose father, Dan Witmer, owned the People's Star a block north of our house where today the Grabill Hardware is located. We played house much of the time and Helen and I were inseparable, often including a few other kids. We had dolls, tin dishes, made mud pies and had loads of fun. The railroad station and tracks were only a short walk across the alley from our home and kids loved to watch the trains come and go. When I was 4 years old a siding (a second track) was put in Grabill and I remember well the many men who came down town in the evenings after their working hours were over.

The Wabash Railroad Corp. had a kitchen car and living quarters for the employees in the South end of town. Living in a small town where all types of people were among those employees I never knew what prejudice was.

Many of the railroad construction gang were black and many Italian (people called the latter "Dagoes") but to me they were people only of a different colored skin.

I talked to all of them as they passed our porch. Our home sat right on the sidewalk. Our living room had two large windows so to add a bit of privacy my dad put frosted glass in them. It allowed as much light as plain glass but wasn't easy to see in at our living and action.

At age 3 my parents sent me to Sunday School. A little white Church named the Grabill Missionary Church and the only church in town was where I attended each Sunday with my older cousin Roscoe. I went there for 8 years and will always say the foundation for my religion was a result of those years. We learned much about the Bible and Jesus and learned so many songs.

The Church had many member of German decent and the language of many was very broken. They sang "Jesus, Jesus, Precious Jesus" but it always sounded like "Cheesus, Cheesus" and my mom and dad corrected my usage of those words. I remember well of learning "Jesus loves the Little Children, All the Children of the World, brown and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight, Jesus loved the little children of the world" also "Hear the Pennies Dropping, Listen as the fall, everyone for Jesus, He will get them all". And later teaching those songs to kids in Spencerville Lutheran church at Sunday School and Vacation Bible School.

I began to give recitations at Christmas and Children's Day when only 4 years old. I've never seen this print but I remember the 1st verse of "Hang up the Baby's Stocking", my first Christmas recitation. To quote: "Hang up the Babys' Stocking, Be sure you don't forget; for our darling little baby has never seen Christmas yet; Oh what a tiny stocking, why that will never do. I'll borrow a stocking from Grandma and pin it on the Toe!". Mom provided a Baby Stocking and Mr. Witmer gave me a long black one.

On Children's Day one year I gave a recitation with pink rambler roses pinned all over my dress and the thorns sticking me the whole time.

The Church had a "Jug Breaking Ceremony" each year in June. Every Sunday School kid was given a little brown jug with hopes they would be returned full of money and public mashing with hammer, Ceremony observed by proud parents, grandparents and friends.

Another annual event which I remember well was the coming of about 50 children from a Chicago orphanage to spend two weeks in the country home of Missionary Church goers. All the kids in town were waiting at the station to greet their arrival.

They came to St. Joe, Indiana on the 20th Century Limited, a B. and O. (Baltimore and Ohio) railroad and then to Grabill on the Wabash. Each child had a small knapsack which held its personal belongings. They were pale and sad looking upon their arrival but assigned to good homes where the mom's were excellent cooks whose cellars were full of canned foods and cured meat and gardens full of fresh veggies and plenty of milk.

With a lot of fresh air and sunshine the roses really returned to their cheeks. Each Sunday at least 2 or possibly 3, depending on the day of the week they arrived, those kids were in Sunday School and we all loved them dearly. Women who could sew made clothes for the girls, complete wardrobes in fact and for the boy's slacks and shirts and socks and underwear were purchased for both. The town and the surrounding community gave generously to that project. The contents of the little brown jugs were the nest egg for the project. After two weeks or a little longer the kids were at the Station to start their trek back to the Windy City. It was a sad but yet Happy Farewell! The kids hated to go and we surely hated to see them leave but very well pleased with the results of that venture. We called them the "Sunshine Kids".

The Missionary Church began to outgrow its structure but a slight dissension arose in the Church, which really took care of itself. The Missionary Church believed in "Immersion" as the only true baptism and had a Ceremony of Immersion each summer at the Cedarville Bridge, a small park on the St. Joe River.

Cedarville was and is a small village Northeast of Ft. Wayne on State Road 1. Cedarville was supposed to be the Capital City of Allen County as the river provided much transportation for trade and businesses, but the railroad changed that and Ft. Wayne became the County seat of Allen County.

However the St. Joe river at Cedarville remained a spot of interest and every 4th of July my parents and many Grabill residents decorated hay wagons and buggies with red, white and blue buntings and flags and headed to Cedarville for a daylong picnic.

The men talked politics, local option on liquor sales and what have you and played ball and horse shoes. The kids had a great time of fun and the ladies provided a luncheon at noon and evening of such a display of food one can hardly imagine. We all returned to Grabill for fireworks scheduled for 9:00 p.m. What a day of fellowship, food and fun.

Grabill often had band concerts and musicals on the band stand on the public square. I remember a Medicine Show coming to Grabill when I was about 5 or 6 years.

My dad took me to see the show the first night it was in town. It was upstairs above the Fair Store and Print Shop. It was great and the second night he allowed me to go with older cousin Roscoe Hursh. The Medicine Man had a pitcher pump like many had in their homes and a wash basin on a stand. He asked for volunteers to come up to have their stomachs pumped. He assured us that it would not hurt and who do you suppose was volunteer #1? Ah yes, dimpled brown eyed Frances.

Roscoe said "I'll tell your mom and dad but cocky me, I said "tellem, I don't care". I went up there, eyes wide open but really scared inside, and he put a small hose into my mouth and pumped the basin full of water. I didn't feel a thing and wonder to this day where that water came from, etc. My dad was very quickly informed of my act by both of us talking at once and said "Hey, slow down! You're alright but don't try that or anything else wild again". He warned me that magic was magic and nosey kids like me would keep it that way.

I owe much of my knowledge and joy to a young bride named Lavina Shilling. She was a 17-year-old new bride of John Shilling, a stock buyer from a large, prominent farm family of the Spencerville community.

She hailed from Antwerp, Ohio. As my parents kept roomers the bride and groom spent several days of each week in our home as he bought live stock in the neighboring communities.

Shortly after they started staying in our home another baby girl came to abide in our home.

Frances had been the center of attention for nearly two years and got her nose literally cut off with the birth of Kathryn, so Lavina decided it would be better if she relieved my mom of my care.

She took over my grooming and entertainment. She was a very pretty young lady, attractive and smart. She knew all the nursery rhymes and lots of kid's stories.

To protect baby Kathryn from a jealous older sister she began teaching me much of her poetic lore. My mom had been a school teacher but with two kids and a house full of roomers she more than had her hands full. Lavina and her husband continued to spend much time with our family.

In fact they were to soon have a family of their own. A daughter was born to them in 1908; a few days after my mother gave birth to another daughter whom they named Mildred. They always came to Grabill when I was in a program at church which I continued to attend until my parents moved to a farm. Earlier in this story I spoke about Immersion becoming a discussion of separation in the Missionary Church. A portion of the members disagreed and felt sprinkling was sufficient for the baptismal rite and left the church, organized a group called the Grabill Mennonite church, proceeded to build a new brick structure on the south side of town and almost before you could say "scat" both buildings were filled and the Missionary Church quickly built a new structure. Today, 1994, has shown growth and success in both denominations and they both, with many changes in the nearly 90 years of existence, are making the communities they serve preaching God's word and spreading the gospel to many parts of the world a fulfillment of the command of Jesus who said "Go, spread the gospel" and they have and are still so doing.

In the summer of 1910 the town of Grabill was buzzing like a hive of bees. Why? Haley's Comet was supposed to appear in the skies and be visible to all who stayed up a bit late that night. To appease a couple of six-year-olds, Helen and myself, my dad put up a tent next to our front porch on a vacant lot and we were given permission to sleep in it that night.

We played for what seemed forever and no comet so we finally fell asleep. My dad promised to wake us if anything unusual appeared in the sky and we had drifted off to dreamland but when we awakened it was daylight and the sun was coming up! Talk about two disappointed kids, we were they, but my mom came out to check us and said we stayed on the porch all night and nothing happened.

Later that morning my mom and aunt Molly came to work in the garden which they had planted across the street behind the Drug Store. And the Fair Store. Very soon my grandma Hursh and cousin Roscoe arrived on the job. Grandma had lost her glasses that forenoon somewhere and the two of them had hunted the house over and could not find them. She had been to the garden earlier and decided she must have lost them at that time.

Well we looked and looked and looked and gave it up for a bad job. My grandma, as did many older ladies, always wore a dust cap. That night when she got ready for bed she found her glasses pushed up on her head under the cap. We kids laughed but were a bit angry to think we wasted our playtime hunting glasses but glad we didn't have to pull weeds out of the carrots and radishes or look for cabbage worms or potato bugs.

Most little girls had a kitten for their very own pet but one little girl did not. Guess who? Her name was Frances. Her dad had good dogs, (hunting) and good horses and he said that situation didn't welcome members of the cat family. My mom didn't want a cat in the house and the barn was off limits to cats, so OK. I didn't want one anyway. But surprise, surprise, one day my mom sent me to the chicken coop for a couple of eggs which she needed right now. I hadn't been to the chicken coop for more than a week. It was in the spring and hens become to wanting to be mothers and nearly each trip to the coop found a hen setting on the nest and clucking and picking with her sharp beak anyone who attempted to invade her private headquarters.

The first next I looked into had such a critter so on I went. The next nest had two eggs so putting them in my little basket, I moved to the next but what a surprise. No old cluck, no eggs but a mamma cat and some kittens. I was so excited that I grabbed a couple of eggs and ran for the house.

All out of breath I gave mom the eggs and planned to return to visit my cat and her family but mom had realized her mistake in sending me out there and quickly thought up something for me to do at once and luckily Lavina my tutor and companion or Nanny arrived and the cats were forgotten. I sneaked to the coop a few days later and Ah! I saw a kitten with its eyes open and petting mamma cat with one hand, I grabbed the kitten with the other and hurried out of the coop.

Proudly and a bit absent-mindedly I was strolling along the front of the house toward the barber shop to show our good friends the barbers who roomed at our house, my new discovery and friend "Little Pussy". I forgot it was lunchtime for my dad and ran right into him. He smiled, said Hi, and just where did you get that? My secret was out and quickly I knew what that meant.

He wasn't cross with me and told me mom had informed him of the new family and sorry but they were going to a new home in the country. I begged him to take them to my grandma's and then I could see them once in a while but he said no, I promised them to Jake and Anna. They were an old Amish couple who lived about a mile east of Grabill. Well OK that's the end of the cat story and the end of a kitten for me. Really, I didn't care, for if you never get close to someone or some animal or thing, well, you won't shed any tears because you lost them.

So to make up or atone for his actions he went with me to put Miss Puss back with her family. On the way back to the house for lunch he said "Get in there and wash your hands for I have a surprise for you". Needless to say I didn't waste any time and with probably half-dried hands I rushed to the table for the surprise. I didn't see anything in his hands or near him so I began to ask questions like mad, what, where and please show me!

He smiled and said sit on my lap, dinner can wait a minute and I'll tell you. "Tomorrow you and I are going to Ft. Wayne on the 9 am train!" I'm sure my eyes were big as golf balls and I asked "what are you going to buy me and are we going to a movie?"

Usually a 5¢ movie at the Lyric Theater on South Calhoun Street was an afternoon of our city trip. He said "NO" to the movie and told me "we are going for a very special purchase which until tomorrow is my secret and don't try to pry it out of your mom or anyone".

That was probably the longest 24 hours in my life. The train was on time and we were headed to the city and those two stops on the way seemed like weeks.

When we got off the train a rather well dressed man with a fancy mustache greeted us and took us to a waiting black Automobile with a driver behind the wheel. I had ridden in a car before as my uncle Lloyd had a car, an Aperson Jack Rabbit. In the car my dad said we are going to the country to a place called the Bass Farm.

What a beautiful sight that was! , A lovely home, a pond on which were swans, another with geese, a huge yard and then a huge barn. A sign on the front had a picture of a Clydesdale horse and a colt and read (which I couldn't do) John Bass Farm. The Home of the Clydesdales. My dad read it to me as did the employee who picked us up. Then my dad said "Frances, I came down here to buy a colt". We looked for quite a while and then my dad made up his mind. He selected one, which he loved the most. My, oh my, the paper work that was done about that horse. He was 9 months old and those horses were so big I couldn't believe he was not full-grown. We were invited to the house for lunch. We ate in the servants dining room but Oh my, oh my what a spread they put on!

The colt was to be delivered on Friday and saying goodbye to the people there and to our new purchase came too quickly but we didn't want to miss our train back to Grabill. My dad had a handful of papers about the colt and more came with him. He was a registered Purebred Clydesdale. His name was Gallant Boy and no other would bear that name. The Bass Farm had brought stable men from Scotland to care for their prize horses. One of them lived in our home after we moved to the farm near Hurshtown.

Many years after that I became a very good friend of his niece and a fellow worker with her at Stillmans Department Store. His name was Steve Miller and her name was Helen Hickman. The Bass Farm is now St. Francis College of Ft. Wayne which my sister Dorothy and I visited on its opening day. We had Gallant Boy around for about 25 or more years when my dad sold him to a horse lover who would put him on pasture for the remainder of his life.

Gallant Boy was a giant in size but he was so kind and gentle and he loved kids. Most kids in Grabill had the pleasure of many horse back rides with my dear old dad leading him around town.

But if you were a person who used chewing tobacco and carried it in your shirt pocket or rear pants pocket then look out, he could smell it when you were anywhere near and could snatch it out of your hiding place and make it a difficult task for my dad to retrieve. His Majesty got the best of care as did the kids in my family and I always looked forward to time of his grooming daily as I watched and asked questions continuously and my dad never refused an answer although the questions were so numerous and often stupid but, hey, I never got a stupid answer or an order: "Please be "Quiet." I'm sure my mom was happy to have a bit of quiet while I spent time in the stable.

Living near the railroad made life very exciting especially if the train happened to have a wreck. I do not remember what caused the wreck but I remember chickens running every where and eggs in crates on the ground and anywhere you looked within a block from the station in every direction. Kids arrived in hordes and were told to try to catch the chickens. Adults were also engaged in the project but kids could run faster and were grabbing fowls like balls in a baseball game. Injured chickens were given to any one who desired them and I took 4 or 5 home although the sight of so many broken eggs and blood everywhere wasn't very good for my stomach. The cattle and hog cars received very little damage so few of those animals were injured. As a kid I never liked eggs anyway but I remember my dad always saying on Easter Morning: "Alright Frances this is Easter and at least you can eat an egg this morning".

The railroad meant much more to me. Freight cars never passed through the town without a few “tramps” riding in an open door car or on top of the cars. Hoboes were the first people on the ground if the train stopped in Grabill and many jumped off even if the train moved on. Hardly a day passed that a hobo didn’t come to your door for a handout. My mom never said “No” but gave them a fresh pumped tin cup of water and a sandwich or some cookies. She always said “Don’t let them in the house ever and don’t ever say my mom and dad aren’t home”. I even asked them questions if the opportunity presented itself. I missed those “men of the road” after moving from Grabill and always wondered what treasures they had in those over-the-shoulder little packs.

Kids in the early 1900’s were ambitious and sometimes mischievous as well. They did not damage property and most kids were very respectful of others. However a few doors from our home and about one block south of the main drag lived an old German man and his wife.

They had no children, she was deaf and couldn’t talk to us but loved to have kids stop in and watch her weave carpet and rugs on a big loom in her spare room. She smiled and always had a treat for us. Sometimes we would take her flowers. He was the worst tempered and grouchy person I have ever met and he hated kids. He spoke in a very broken language, a combination of German and poor English.

Kids loved to play innocent tricks on him. Grabill being the center of a German community, the making of wine was a usual custom. In the spring most everyone made Dandelion Wine. It was a concoction of dandelion blossoms, oranges, lemons, sugar, yeast and water. More I don’t know. Kids were always picking blossoms for some one to use in their wine making. The old grouch, Mr. Gleasman, was a good employer but a poor paying one. The right of way along the railroad was covered with yellow blossoms. Most people living along that right of way, (and really only two or three houses in Grabill had indoor plumbing) had outhouse toilets. Dandelions grew huge there and for Mr. Grouch we always picked his blooms near the outhouses and left long stems on them in order to fill his bucket more rapidly as he only gave us a dime for that amount and most everyone else gave us a nickel for a quart.

About a week before Halloween the big kids would pull his outhouse down to the public square and we little squirts would carry or pull our wagons full of his firewood down there and store it in the little building. Each day he would pull it back home and each night we would repeat the prank. He went to the town Marshall who was also the village Blacksmith and demanded the kids be punished but since he was a prankster himself (always walked around with a garter snake in his pocket) and his two kids were a part of the gang, and he could see no wrong involved, did nothing. The grouch called us little S------. Kids will always be kids and fun is fun if its not destructive or dangerous.

August 3, 1910 was my 6th birthday, so the best present I received was a "Primer", my first book to be used as "A Reader" for now I was ready for school in September.

A good friend of our family, who had a restaurant in Leo, gave me the book. I remember well the first page. To quote: "I am May, I am a girl, I can run, I can jump. Can you run? Can you jump? " The next page was: "I am Spot. I am a dog " and the same story. Each page had a very colorful picture of the person and animal involved.

My dad was a good friend of the Cedar Creek Township Trustee who lived in Leo, Indiana. He was also the village blacksmith. One day he was sitting on our porch talking school with my dad. I was being a quite interested listener. He was telling me that the Cedar Creek Township was finalizing plans for a new school building but was lamenting the fact that his Advisory Board (and "heavens" I wondered, "what's that) had cut the building budget by a sizeable amount and the school would be overcrowded before it even opened. After he left I asked my dad what that was that cut his money for a new school. I probably forgot the name, but a few years later I heard it again and never forgot it.

September 1910 I started to school. I went to a one-room school located on the Page Road about 2 or 1 1/2 miles north of Grabill. It was a nice school, at least I thought so, and my teacher was John B. Schwartz. Our first part of the year about 2-1/2 months, we were in the primer. All kids walked to school in those days, however on a rainy day, cold or snowy day, my dad who had horses and a buggy and a sleigh would always drive me and two friends to school.

Needless to say I had many friends on those days and the first two at our door got to ride. I hated to get up in the morning and very often kids had to wait on me, as I wasn't ready.

Finally one morning my dad said: "O.K. just go on and she will have to come alone". A few minutes later I was on my way, running as much as possible.

A rail fence was built along the road and when I was near enough for the kids to see me I would hide in one of the corners of the fence until they were out of sight, and then take off running like a deer. Everything was fine until I got to the Page Road corner and had to turn right.

As I turned there was a cow on a chain, staked out for good eating. I was scared to death of her and finally she moved nearer the fence and I ran like a scared bunny, which I admit I was. I arrived at school just as the last bell was ringing and, hey, people, I never slept late again.

After completing the primer, knowing the alphabet, being able to print our names and do small problems of addition, we were promoted to the First Grade. In about two more months we were in the second grade. At Christmas while in the first grade our school did Mother Gooses Christmas Tales as our program. I was chosen to be Little Miss Muffet. An orphan boy who lived with a local family was chosen to be Little Jack Horner. The foster mother baked him raisin pie (not plum) and as he recited his verse he passed around a bite of the pie. I just got mine in my mouth when it was my turn to recite, my mouth was full and what oh what do I do now? Should I swallow it and maybe choke or spit it in my bowl of curds and whey, or take time to chew it well. I did both, chewed and tried to talk but the spider came to my rescue and frightened me away.

In late March of 1911 my parents sold their property in Grabill and moved to my Uncle's farm. My mom wasn't too eager to do so and I really cried to leave all my good friends and my beloved school. My uncle had a new two-story home built on the farm and we were its first tenants. Now I was to enter another new school. The second grade in that school, only a mile from home and called the Egypt School, was located 2-1/2 miles east of my first school which bore the name of Klopfenstein, had been in the second grade the entire school year and I had barely started in it. But the teacher put me in with 3 or 4 other kids and I worked real hard to catch up with them and even advance ahead of them.

My dad helped me intensely as I needed to learn multiplication tables and to improve my writing. Spelling and reading were very easy for me so I finished in May with a promotion to the 3rd grade. I didn't like that teacher, in fact I was scared to death of him, as he whipped kids when they didn't recite well.

One boy I knew as he had lived in Grabill, just south of our home. They lived in a rather old building which at one time housed a D.M. Sears pickle salting station.

Oh, yes, Grabill had industry, two stores, a drug store, a restaurant, a post office, a hardware, a GristMill and elevator, and a lumberyard. I got by the grouchy teacher for 2-1/2 years and learned a lot with always my dad as a pushing force.

The former living quarters on the farm was a log house. I never knew how long it had stood vacant. I loved that old log house and I used to crawl up the ladder to the second floor with a book and curl up in a corner and pretend I was Abe Lincoln. I had listened to older classes talking about him and his picture and one of George Washington hung on a school wall. Oh, yes, 8 grades composed that school's student body and often I found myself listening to the older classes and then taking part of my assignments home for finishing. Candles which he used were forbidden by my parents so all of the trips up there has to be taken in the daylight hours.

I must have been an adventurous 9-year-old and I liked a little privacy which was hard to get with 2 sisters and a brother younger than you, always under your feet.

By the way, I need to backtrack a couple of years; Grabill had a Lady Dentist while I was a very young girl of 5 years of age. She had her patient's chair in a solarium of her home. I went to her home daily to get my family's bucket of milk. She would always invite me in and often allowed me to sit in the dental chair while she checked my teeth. To tell the truth I have never met a lady dentist since and as I think back it's almost unbelievable that a woman could be such an important person. I mean she must have struggled to become such an important necessity to humanity when Men only did everything but have children.

She was a great lady and with the death of her sister a few years later she reared her three nephews along with her own 2 sons.

Grabill also had a fine young doctor named Dr. Ray, who came to Grabill in 1907 or 1908. His first patient was a brother in law of the dentist. He suffered an attack of appendicitis and was rushed to Ft. Wayne on the train for surgery, but it was too late and he died during the operation. What a blow that must have been for the young doctor, but he continued his practice for several years very successfully and then moved to Ft. Wayne where he continued the practice of Medicine for many years. He remained a family friend and my dad visited him often. He had two sons, one of whom was my age and my schoolmate and sweetheart. His name was Bronson. The younger boy was Winston. I had completely lost track of the boys. But in the 1940's a friend of mine and fellow employee at the Grand Leader went east to consult a heart specialist, upon returning home she told me his name was Bronson Ray, a small town lad then nationally famous. I met him a year later when he visited his dad and mother in Ft. Wayne. The younger boy who had Polio while living in Grabill and from whom my sister Kathryn caught it was a Criminal Lawyer in Arizona. Small town kids educated in one-room school houses often turned out GOOD.

As a youngster I must have been a rebel, at least a mischievous brat. I remember well an incident that happened while I was probably five years. It was just after lunch and my mom and my aunt were doing the dishes and cleaning up the dining room and I did something to drive my mom up the wall. Underneath the stair steps a large closet has been built with an entrance from the dining room.

It was quite spacious and very dark in there. My mom opened the door and in a very stern voice (which she seldom used) "said Alright Frances you go in there and stay until I feel you have learned your lesson". I hate to admit it but I was scared in there. I walked around the things stored in there and what did I find "a metal lard can" and it was large. People butchered hogs and fried the fat in open kettles for a product called "lard". It held about 5 gallons and sometimes the can was used to store vegetables as well. I sat down on the floor and began pretending to be playing a piano and singing at the top of my voice. I truly wasn't a vocalist but I sang loud and clear and endlessly. Very soon she opened the door and said, "you can come out now if you think you can behave yourself." I felt so happy and said "Yes. Yes, Mom".

If I had been the mother and she the child I'm certain that door would have remained shut for a long time and no amount of begging would have gotten it opened. They always say the wheel that squeaks the loudest gets the most grease and man, oh man, could I yell loud. Thanks mom you always were tops.

Another incident dealt with my little sister Kathryn. My mom tried everything under the sun to get that girl potty trained but coaxing, bribing and even a soft spanking once or twice did no good. Hey, she was nearly two years old and my mom was expecting another baby in a couple of months. Girls at that time wore black sateen bloomers when diapers were a thing of the past but with Kathryn they seemed to be a never possibility. One morning after giving her a bath, putting on clean clothes and new panties my mom told her now Kathryn if you wet in these I'm going to take them off of you and tie them around your neck and you are going to sit on that long front porch until your dad comes home to lunch. Helen and I had a play house between the summer kitchen and the fence and the weaving lady had given us a strip of her carpet about 2 yards long and a yard wide which we had just spread on the ground and were getting our house in order when Miss Kathryn came out and wet on it. I couldn't get into the house fast enough to tattletale on her. My mom came and got her and did exactly what she had promised and very soon Miss Kathryn was seated on the porch where every one passing by could see her. My mom came out with a pan of suds and washed the carpet and made us promise to play somewhere else until it dried. We did just that but centered ourselves on the porch and yelled at passers-by to inform them that Kathryn was sitting there also. Hey folks I doubt if I would ever do that to my little girl but I was lucky she was potty trained by the time she was 1 year old, thanks to my two youngest sisters.

It worked and from that day on Kathryn had dry bloomers about 90 % of the time and Kathryn, I'm sorry I considered you such a pest for truly you were a great sister.

Life on the farm was great! We had just lambs, a dog, chickens, turkeys and even guineas. While plowing a field one day for corn planting I was riding on my dad's lap when what should he plow up but a bunch of eggs. He gathered them up, put them over on the sod and sent me to the house for an old pan to put them in.

I hurried as fast as I could and he picked up the eggs and we went to the house. He told me that they were snake eggs and I should not come back to that field until he had gotten rid of the mother, namely a Blue Racer. In due time the mother returned and dad was ready for her and proceeded to put her out of existence. He made a screened box, put the eggs in it and took it to the saloon in Grabill where my uncle put it in the window and with the warm sun coming in the little snakes began crawling out of the eggs. What a mess of wigglers that was and my uncle called for us to come in and see them along with every kid in town. I was so excited and really scared but after a couple of days at the hands of a couple men and my dad they suddenly disappeared.

At another time we were fishing at the gravel pit on the Van Zile farm where my dad lived as a boy we found a lot of turtle eggs which we took back to Grabill. They were put in that same window and when they were hatched were finally taken back to the river. My pal Helen and I tried to mash them in our attempts to make better mud pies but they were like hard rubber and all of our pounding was in vain and we continued our pies without eggs.

Just read the morning sports page and a review on the Duke-Arkansas game and one of the players names "Thurman" refreshed my memory. (On an earlier page I mentioned New Haven and another stop between Grabill and Ft. Wayne, that was the name of the Station location. Ah at last I remembered. In reading the same paper I read where a man was arrested and held without Bond on a charge of Indecent Exposure. That brought back another unpleasant event. On the way to the Post Office one morning in fact it was my birthday Aug. 3, 1910. About one half block from my home and at the side door of the Peoples Store stood a BIG man with his trousers down exposing himself and he called to me. I saw it was a man whom my parents and told me to never talk to.

I started running and screaming like a roaring lion and at once people seemed to come from everywhere, including Mr. Witmer the storeowner and my uncle and my dad. They grabbed him and sat him down on the stair steps behind him which led upstairs to where he lived. Some one called Willie Merrill the village Marshall and who was also a deputy sheriff. Smiling Willie came with his handcuffs and proceeded to put him under arrest. My mom was holding me and saying "don't cry! He won't scare anyone again"; His name was Arthur Starr.

He had been booked before but no one followed up with the charges and he was free again. But this time he was never seen on the streets of Grabill ever and no one told me what happened to him. I was too young to know the words 'Indecent Exposure' but years later I heard them and my mom told me their meaning and I've never forgotten that incident. Thank God I saw him before I might have been pulled into the stairway and time erased the scare but memory told me "Beware of men who are supposed to be bad."

Now back to life on the farm! In the summer of 1912 when all daily papers were filled with news of the sinking of the Titanic a young man the same age as I had a small boat, a replica of the Titanic. He lived about one block down the road from our house and I often went down there to play. We really had a lot of fun with that boat in a tub of water. His brother worked at Lincoln Life in Fr. Wayne and bought the boat as a gift to Stanley.

Across the road from our house lived a Mr. and Mrs. Astry and a spinster daughter Arrah. Two grand daughters from Ft. Wayne named Hazel and Doris came out for vacation in the summer and we became very good friends, as they were the same ages as my sister Kathryn and I. We talked about school and they said they went to the James Smart School on Pontiac St. and lived on Anthony Blvd just south of Pontiac. Little did I ever know then that in years to come my daughter would attend Smart School many years in fact it was 1936 or 1937 or both as she went there two years.

We continued to live on my uncle's farm until March 1913. My dad and my uncle had a disagreement and my parents bought another farm of their own on the McNabb Road in Cedar Creek Township, just a mile and one half north of the Hurshtown home in which I was born. In later years I heard people say watch your step when doing business with relatives. My dad and uncle had hard feelings but in later years everything was forgotten and they became real brothers and buddies.

My mom and my aunt didn't share in their problems of disagreement and were always good friends and good sisters -in-laws.

In fact the second summer we lived on his farm my mom and my aunt took my sister and I to Ft. Wayne on the train to buy us spring coats and shoes: My Aunt made dresses for us so they were also buying materials for sewing. We got matching coats-black and white checked (small Checks) with white braid trim and white buttons and my aunt bought us hats of straw with a big bow and streamers of navy ribbon. While they were looking at material I found a one-dollar bill on the floor and offered it to the clerk. She said "Thank you" little girl but you can keep it. We were in Frank's Store just across from the West Side of the courthouse. Oh yes, I never forgot that either.

Time passes so swiftly and now its March 1913. Every one is talking about the flood of the century. Headlines on the Journal Gazette a Ft. Wayne morning paper which my dad took ever since we moved to Grabill read St. Joseph and St. Mary's rivers should crest today. Maumee is already above flood stage. It didn't mean too much to me, as I had never really seen high water or the damage it could cause. A new little girl had arrived at the Hursh home in February and because she was so tiny (2-1/2 lb.) friends, neighbors and relatives were so excited about her. She was the size of my doll and I wasn't too impressed. My mom had made diapers, Kimonos and gowns for her and with the help of Aunt Milly everything was ready. I remember my dad telling Tillie Schlatter that the diapers were 36 inches square and he cut them in four pieces. She said "Gee, Eck, you have to shake the sheet to find her". Mom and baby did fine and by late March we were ready to move to the farm which my parents had bought on the McNabb road about one mile north of the Birthplace of both my dad and I. It was a spacious rather old house of two stories and a basement. I don't remember too much of the moving process but remember getting living room carpet and a couple of rockers from Beam's Store in Spencerville. Now Kathryn and I would be attending school in Leo in the building I mentioned earlier that would be overcrowded before it opened. The school wasn't opened until mid October due to construction. Now floodwaters had caused it to close for a week to get settled for a two-week period. That gave us another week to get settled in the new community. We had said good-bye to our schoolmates and neighbors.

Made me sad but I was so glad to get away from Mr. Roy Darling the teacher of whom I was so scared. One of my schoolmates was Austin Feller the father of Ron who now operates the funeral home in Waterloo.

He was a cute little curly haired kid who recently came to live in the Feller home one mile east of Egypt school. As a first grader he was so mischievous but loved by all of the school kids.

Early April 1913 the waters had subsided and school in Leo was again open. The school hack pulled by a team of horses arrived at our house at 6:30 A.M. We were the first kids on the bus. My dad took a lantern to walk us out to the road and be sure we got on it (the hack) without falling. One hour later he could look across the fields and see us going south near State Road #1. What a change that was! I had always walked to school or driven there by dear old dad. Kids were friendly but nosey on the hack and asked all kinds of questions about our family.

School was extremely different. Kathryn went into the Primary Room taught by Joe Schwartz and I went into the intermediate room of 3rd and 4th graders taught by Daisy Warner. More kids in the 4th grade alone than either of the two country schools I had attended. We had indoor restrooms with flush toilets and was bowls for our hands and drinking fountains. I was accustomed to outdoor toilets, a bucket of drinking water from a hand-pumped well in the schoolyard. Everyone used the same dipper but few kids had colds or diseases common to kids. In fact, I went through all eight grades of school without any communicable disease. In fact in all twelve years of public school I had only Small Pox. I got sick in the office of Dr. Nelson Shook in Grabill while being vaccinated. I had Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria the holiday season of 1921 after I had graduated in May of that year and had only one childhood disease, the Measles, when my daughter had them in 1931. Tough kid, eh? And I still am in 1994.

When I arrived in the Leo School the 4th grade kids were studying long division in arithmetic. I had learned that long before and my classmates kept asking how do you know this; how did you learn it, are you that smart? My answer was always the same: "if you had a dad like my dad you would know it too!" It was difficult for me and although my mom had taught school she had too many family duties to help with schoolwork.

She made sure we had clean clothes, a warm bed, good meals and a happy home and always were ready when the school hack arrived.

When long division came up at the Country School immediately after supper my dad sat down with me at the dining room table and began to get long division into my thick head. I cried a little and then kept on trying and by 9 PM by an oil lamp I had mastered the problem. Remember my dad had only gone through the 4th grade of school but never quit learning on the hard rocky road of life and he was a forceful educator, doing his best to be certain his kids get a good education. I had no problem getting accustomed to my new school surroundings and never adjusted to home work which very often I wouldn't have had if part of my study time hadn't been wasted.

The second year and the fifth grade I had Orpha Bender for a teacher. She like Daisy before her were spinster ladies but excellent teachers and role models. Riding the hack was great and the kids usually behaved quite well. My dad started driving the hack my second year in school at Leo. A boy named Fred Watson who was my age and whom I had known while still living in Grabill was a rather poor behavior on the hack. One morning my dad stopped the horses and said in a rather sharp tone of voice "now Fred you sit down and shut up or I will (in a soft tone of voice) have to come back there and (very softly) give you a half a dollar". Fred was embarrassed and dumbfounded as were all we kids but say he never needed reprimanding again. He always called a tall lanky gal on the van "Brass Monkey" and we never heard that again either. We had good van drivers but at first High School kids had to find their own transportation. I drove a horse one-year and the hotel owner would unhitch the horse in the morning put him in the stable and the hitch him back up for me at night. However by the 3rd year of High School all students in the county were provided transportation. In the 7th and 8th grade we were in Junior High with Safara Gerig for a teacher and Miss Leach as our home Economics teacher. She was left-handed so it was a bit harder to learn to sew from her. We made kits for the soldiers of World War I. They were sewing kits made of blue serge which was donated by a tailoring company in Ft. Wayne and we used two pieces of white flannel for filler. We blanket stitched the outside edges and they looked real nice. They were about 5 x 9 inches folded in the middle and supplied with pins, needles, safety pins and khaki heavy thread. I still have a roll of khaki thread which my husband had from the army.

We cooked in the 8th grade. I remember a couple of things I made. Codfish strips which I hated, Jelly and Eggless, milkless butter milk cake, and corn bread, also baked potatoes we made once a week for all kids who brought a potato with their initials cut on the potato. I didn't like the skins which we were told to eat so I usually forgot my potato. I didn't taste them really, but imagined I couldn't like them so why try them. I loved High School after passing the 8th grade exam in the spring of 1917. An exam which all 8th graders in the county were required to take. It was a bit hard but I had several 100's in the exam grades and would have one more if I hadn't changed an answer. I was 2nd highest in the township. Sept. 1917, 28 freshmen enrolled in Leo High. Our commencement was county wide and held at the old Scottish Rite Cathedral in downtown Ft. Wayne. My dad had just got a new Ford and I had learned to drive when only 12 years old. You needed no driver's license then. In fact I got my first drivers license at age 25 and I still have it. 1929 they became a compulsory item. While learning to drive at age 12 I broke about 2 dozen hen eggs when I hit a hole in the road going down hill about 2 blocks from home. My folks milked 7 or 8 cows and sold milk to the Cheese factory in Leo. At first I hauled the milk in the buggy with a driving horse and then after we owned a car I used it to take the milk. The milk had to be thoroughly cooled in a tank of running water. Each day I took 2 cans of milk and brought home 2 cans of whey for hog feed.

The cheese factory was an old brick building which at one time served as a school just across the fence from our schoolyard. Ott Menchi was the owner and operator and his sister Miss Strudel worked for him. Many noon hours we girls would visit the cheese factory and she would give us samples of whatever type of cheese she was packaging. I loved Swiss but often ate Brick or Colby. Mr. Fred Marloff worked for Menchi also. Fred finally learned the business and purchased it and opened the County Line Cheese Company. Mr. Menchi according to all records really got a dirty deal in the transaction. He had turned to alcohol as a prop and died almost penniless after working so very hard and rearing a fine family.

Next to the schoolhouse I attended on the corner of the street lived a little old lady quite crippled but with a loud voice. She hated kids! She had an outside double cellar door right at the sidewalk and we kids girls as well as boys jumped on that door nearly every time we passed and yelled "Mary" real loud.

By the time we got to the schoolyard she was out doors yelling “you brats”, I’ll get you yet but she never did. Across the street on the East corner was an old white Catholic Church. My dad told me that one time it had been a prosperous active congregation and that my aunt’s father Cosper had been a very active member. It had been unused for a long time but a lady named Jane Dignan lived next door west in an old house which belonged to St. Vincent’s parish the name of the Church in Leo. Many noon hours 4 or 5 of we girls paid Jane a visit and asked to see the Church. Her home was as filthy as a pigsty and we never stayed in it but a few minutes. She had a little laundry stove with an oval oven on the stovepipe, the only such stove I have ever seen in my life. She would be cooking in tin cans and have horrible smelling stuff in that oven. We would ask her to take us over to the Church. I have no idea how long the building had been empty but it was so full of cobwebs, bats and what have you that one could hardly get through the place and breathe. We would coax her to play the old pump organ and she would oblige. None of us were Catholic so we didn’t know the songs she played and sang. She pretended to be an opera singer and had a big broad-rimmed tall hat she often wore while in the Choir loft. We would coax her to play America or My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean or Three Blind Mice and we would join in those songs. Well kids have always been kids and we were no different than kids today, however we were never destructive and knew well what respect meant. We were adventurous and full of the old nick but we were good kids, good students and young busy bodies.

There was a cider mill on the river bank down near the old dam. They made cider in season at least three times a week we would go down there for a juicy apple and then pay a visit to Julie Fink Kane who lived one block east on the corner. She was as odd as Jane but oh so clean and frilly you were almost afraid to even sit down for fear of wrinkling a doily or a scarf. She was French and still had a bit of the accent. She loved to show us her house and tell us about how she came to Leo, Indiana about her ex husband who abandoned her for a dancer in Toledo.

She was a good cook and a great baker of sugar and Molasses cookies and her large jar was always full of cookies which she always shared with us and begged us to come back. We always had to run in order to get back to school before the last bell rang. We had two or three tennis courts on the school yard and a basketball court as well. We had no gym but we had a good basket ball team.

They had to practice in an old barn located behind the building used as restaurant now. It was a general store while I was in school.

We had some boys who even became Semi pro Basketball players later on. One named George Schlatter played with an alumni team at Spencerville and later with a city supported team in Ft. Wayne where he was employed as a knitter at the Ft. Wayne Knitting Mill. Both men and women 's hose were made in that mill and sold almost nation wide. Our team got a lot of backing from parents but it was years before they had a gym in fact several years after I graduated.

By the second year of my attendance in High School our class members shrunk to only 20. Kids kept quitting. I had a Latin teacher who gave me a B although I translated every day. It was wartime and German had been banned in the public schools while I was in the 8th grade. I loved Latin. It was the only foreign language offered and two years of foreign language were required for graduation. I took it for three years, elementary or Latin grammar. Caesar and Cicero I wanted to take it the 4th year which would have been Virgil but only two of us signed for it and thus it was not available. We had great high school teachers, a great principal who replaced her husband as school superintendent when his health forced retirement. Nellie T. Mershon was her name and she was the greatest. A large unattractive lady but well groomed and a role model for everyone she met. I owe much to her! One time she said to me "Frances you better get the best education possible and then use it for if you have to make a living with your hands you will definitely starve to death. I tried factory work once for two weeks and that was two weeks too much for me. I really wasn't a klutz but it wasn't my piece of the pie. A very strange and wonderful experience happened to our second year Latin Class. With so many dropping out of school our class members became fewer and fewer.

Being the oldest child in the family I sort of acted as the boy of all jobs. Each evening before mom and dad milked the cows it was my job to climb up into the haymow and throw down cattle feed. One mow had shredded corn fodder in it. I was up in the mow when I heard my mother say "Frances seems so discouraged maybe we should just let her quit school. My dad replied "I'll tell her when to quit!" I never even thought of such a thing for I loved school very much and still do.

My Latin teacher gave me a B as I mentioned before and that broke my heart. B was a no-no on my grade card. I cried and protested so loudly that she changed it to A- and the next month gave me an A.

One day in second year Latin, she asked the class if we could walk a mile or a mile and a half. All kids cried YES. YES! She continued "well tomorrow we are taking a field trip. ." Never had heard of such a program but today kids from nursery school and on take field trips. She said there will be no Latin class tomorrow if you will be especially well prepared for the day after when we will use the assignment I'm about to give to you. Talk about excitement!! That Sophomore Latin class was bubbling over. 24 hours to wait seemed like eternity. I was ready for the bus very early the next morning and could hardly wait to get to school. The morning was so long. At last it was lunch time and most of us ate hurriedly, rushed to the bathroom, washed our hands and feverishly awaited the bell to ring for resuming classes. At last it was 12:45. We went to the south room where Latin class was always held. Miss Marian Ingham was our teacher. She was a tall, young lady, not pretty but very attractive and business-like in appearance. She wore large glasses, had a big nose and was truly an educator. She was the daughter of a Ft. Wayne realtor and both she and her sister Meriam were high school teachers. . Immediately she said "Get your coats, hats and gloves on and go quietly downstairs and wait for the other pupils and me" Quiet was almost an impossibility but each and everyone obeyed. She opened the front door and said, "Line up 2 by 2 and follow me" she went to the end of the school sidewalk and turned left. Each of us obediently followed. She had a loud whistle which she blew if we were to stop. At the first corner the whistle blew and she told us to turn left. We were to walk as far as possible the left side of the road. Anxiously we plodded on. Very soon we looked to our right in a field about 1/2 mile west of Leo and saw an airplane in a field used as a pasture field by the owner.

A big gate was swung open. We carefully crossed the road and went through the gate. We were greeted by a young flyer who introduced himself then gave the teacher a hug and said, "She is my fiancée and hopefully will be my life partner when I get back to the states." He allowed each of us to sit in the plane with him, telling us all that a few minutes would allow about the plane and trying to answer a million questions.

He said he was a Junior in college but decided our country needed many young men to defeat the German army so he enlisted in the Air Corps. After about 1 1/2 hours in the field, he told us all goodbye, kissed Miss Ingham and told us where to go while he took off. We all joined in a prayer asking God to watch over him and protect him and said "bye", waving as long as we could see the plane. . The walk back to school was a short one because we were so excited. Can you imagine a bunch of 14 and 15 year olds seeing and sitting in an U.S aeroplane? It was so hard to settle down for the next few days. I was the only kid in the group that rode on our van. At home I couldn't stop talking about it. Another girl and I formed a letter of thanks and everyone signed it and we asked Miss Ingham to send it to him once he was located in France. Just 10 days later when we arrived at school we saw no Miss Ingham but a substitute teacher. We all asked why? Is she sick? Where is she? Just then her dad came into the class room and told us the bad news. The flyer whom we were so proud of had been shot down over France. After a few days Miss Ingham returned to school, heart-broken but brave about it all. She told us his body would be returned to the States and later to Ft. Wayne and that our class was to join her family at the funeral. We were honored at her request but very sad. Several parents took us to the funeral which was held in the same place as our 8th grade graduation. We met his mom and dad and his two sisters and a brother who was also in the Air Corps.

We returned to school in time to catch our own hacks home. We were very sad but proud to have been a part of her sorrow. We felt very different after that sadness in her life. She was truly a great teacher and after about 5 years she became a member of the faculty of Ft. Wayne Central High School. She never married and lived and taught for many years, dying at age 78.

Miss Ingham, although I hated you once or I should say 'disliked' you (I never hated anyone actually), you were a great influence on my young life and provided me with the advantages of a good education. I'll never forget you. Today I see her in Leo High just as I did when I graduated 73 years ago. She walked swiftly, head held high, body very erect and because of her height, took long strides but always walked gracefully.

WORLD WAR 1-----The war put a damper on many activities. When the call came out for volunteers, two of our fine young students: Charles Disler and Dave Lantz enlisted. They were Juniors but felt the country needed them more and off they went. Truly a sad day when the school said goodbye to them. They were members of our basketball team and we needed every player we could get. Thank heavens they came home healthy and O.K. A member of our church at Spencerville, Fred Steward went to the service but died of pneumonia in the States leaving a young son who he had only seen once and a young widow, LeAnna. Actually I remember more about world war 1 than I do about world war .11. a 14 year old kid especially one who asked many questions and read every newspaper she could get her hands on had much to remember. The Klu Klux Klan burned a cross on the Lutheran Church lawn in Spencerville and on the streets in the center of Leo. Bond rallies were held in most small towns, even in the churches. "Buy a war bond" now was the cry. Mr. Hoover was appointed by Pres. Wilson to serve as food administrator during the war and everyone was asked to tighten their belts a notch or two and conserve food. My dad always went to the rallies and took at least me along. At one such gathering I spoke a recitation named "The Hoover Pledge" It was a parody on Riley's poem "Little Orphan Annie." I've tried to find a copy of it even from the State library but no luck. It probably was from a magazine but I remember this much: "The darned old Hoover pledge has come to our house to stay. To snatch our breakfast bacon up and take our steaks away.....but if sometimes your whole soul longs for chicken, butter fried, remember then that Kaiser Bill is short on sauerkraut and the Yanks are gonna get him if he don't watch out."

My mom had always baked bread. When I was a little girl she and 4 other ladies shared a yeast can. A quart jar was filled with sponge (bread mixture) and passed from one to another. It was fresh daily as Mom baked twice a week, as did Mrs. Witmer. I loved to take the can of yeast to Mrs. Witmer as she was such a sweet grandma and always had a big sugar cookie for me.

In fact I learned to bake bread at age 12. My mom was working in the pickle patch every day except Sunday. She would have everything ready but to add the flour and knead, I wasn't strong enough to mix or knead it all at once so I divided the dough. I would knead it, cover it and set it in a warm place to rise.

When it had doubled in size I would make it into loaves and maybe rolls put it in well-greased pans and allow to rise again. By that time it was at least 11 a.m. and Mom and Dad would break for lunch. I would have a hot fire in the kitchen range with the heat turned on the oven and Mom would take over the baking. Oh, that hot bread baking gave us a smell to make anyone hungry. She wouldn't go back to the field until the bread was out of the oven, the top crusts greased and loaves put out to cool. -

With the war in full swing, things changed a bit. Although we had our own flour, we had to take buckwheat and rye flour, corn meal and rolled oats in order to get 25 lbs. of white flour. My mom quit baking and we bought bread made at Perfection Biscuit Company in Ft. Wayne. We kids could walk down to the little store in Hurshtown which was owned and operated by the David Smith family who did so even when I was born. Dave ran a huckster route past our house once a week when Mom would sell her eggs and buy more supplies. We kids usually just got a couple of loaves of bread and a link of bologna. Once in a while Mom baked bread---a real treat!! But most of the remainder of her life it was store bread and most of the kids in our family didn't know the difference because of their ages. In our junior year we were saddened when one of our favorite teachers Miss Anna Harrod from Hoagland, Ind. tendered her resignation to accept a call to go as a missionary to Hyderabad, India. I already had a friend, Jean Mumma Zeigler there with her husband. It is a great calling and both served many years in that country as a teacher, nurse and doctor. We hated to tell her good bye and she sang in a sweet soft voice to us: "smile the while, you bid me sad adieu. When the years roll by, I'll come back to you" She left the next day for the East coast where she was indoctrinated for tour of duty in the land of poverty, disease and dire need for help.

In the fall of 1920, ten seniors reported for their final year at Leo High School. Only nine of the original freshmen were around plus Cecil Trimble who joined us in the spring of 1920, coming from Spencerville. We were a happy sort of rebellious bunch of students. We had a Sophomore class party at our home in October of 1920. Our house had burned to the ground just a few days before my family had planned to move to the VanZile farm about half-way between Leo and Spencerville.

This is where my dad had spent much of his early life, living with Uncle Eck. It was a large 2-story house, poorly insulated in its construction which made it hard to heat in the winter.

I thought it was for Sophomores only but a couple of those Sophs, including my sister Kathryn decided to make it a surprise for me including the Seniors. I had gone up to bed when bang, bang, thud, thud, upstairs came the girls in my class. I got up, dressed and went down stairs to a war whoop of Surprise, Surprise. I was dating a Sophomore lad named Glenn Garman at the time. My cousin who owned the farm on which we had moved very recently had moved to California and had stored considerable items upstairs and left her piano (Player) in the living room. We played roll after roll on the piano and sang our hearts and lungs out (almost). We played Post Office and spin the bottle and even a few games outdoors before my mom and a couple of teachers served lunch. In the meantime some of the boys discovered a barrel of cider which was getting a bit fermented or became what was called Hard Cider. They got a bit much too near the bottom of the barrel and felt a bit nauseated and happy but none fared too badly. It was a school night so by 9:30 they were on their way home after thanking the Hursh family for their hospitality and yelling "See you in the morning". It was the first class party for either class but not the last. It was a precedent to be followed for several years.

The year moved very swiftly and now it was February. Each February the farmers of Cedar Creek Township had a two-day and one night session called "The Farmers Institute". My dad had been an ardent supporter of that project for about 6 or 7 years and always insisted that I give a recitation at the evening program which was strictly entertainment. During the day they had displays of farm produce, speeches and business meetings. It was held in a St. John's Reformed Church next door west of the school until 902 when it was moved to the Leo Methodist Church which was much larger.

A promise of a new dress and shoes and probably a hair ribbon was a yearly promise and always fulfilled and even though it meant driving a horse to get there for a while we never missed the gala and it was fun.

Our Senior year was filled with a lot of hard work; anticipation and a bit of sadness when we realized school days were about to be a thing of the past for we Seniors.

In the spring the class planned a picnic on the banks of the St. Joe River on Orpha Van Zile's place of living. She was the oldest member of our class as poor health and a nervous breakdown had kept her out of school for two years. She was a great friend and engaged to marry the brother of my best girl friend Velma Akey. Since she had invited him to the party the girls scrounged up dates, as did most of the boys. I was no longer keeping company with Mr. Garman so I invited another sophomore named Walburn Pence to go as my escort. Parent teacher meeting was scheduled at the school that night so after cleaning up the picnic mess we played the PTA a visit and to aggravate the teachers we sat 2 in a single seat at the meeting. We got a lot of stares and if looks could kill you we would all have been dead before morning but it was after school hours and a public meeting so what? Not a word was said by the teachers the next morning.

As the year rolled on an order came from the State Superintendent of Schools which ordered each senior to write and deliver an oration of at least 10 minutes duration at a public meeting as a requirement for graduation. They offered "Public Housing, Its Need and How to Solve the Problem" as one subject but they were very lenient saying choose your own subject if that suggestion isn't appealing to you. It sounded very good to me so I talked three others to join me on the subject. The winner of the contest would represent Leo High School in a district meeting at Central High School in Ft. Wayne. The night of the speech production arrived. The six classmates who had prepared and chosen their own topics spoke first and then the four contestants were chosen by drawing numbers to do their bit. I drew # one. Sort of a disadvantage but I cared less. I wanted this contest and hoped I had prepared it well. Three judges who knew none of us had been chosen.

One was the County Superintendent of Schools, a teacher from Harlan, IN and a Ft. Wayne businessman. I received the most votes, 3 of 3, and I must prepare to go to Ft. Wayne Central High School on the following Thursday at 1:30 P.M. Everything was fine until that morning when I heard Mrs. Mershon say "Frances only got that decision because of her deliverance. She has had much experience in speaking in public." I was raving mad and said, "I'm not going!" and I meant it. We lived in a very German community and many of us said she always favored the Dutch.

I had many supporters but I was definitely determined to stand my ground although the kids were truly backing me. Some of them called my dad and he came down to school to intercede and cool his daughter down. By then I had changed my mind and was willing to go along with whomever was going. We arrived at Central High at about 1 PM and with directions arrived in the auditorium early. . What a huge place that was and I admit I was getting scared. Three other speakers arrived and we were introduced to each other. one from Huntington, one from New Haven one, from Ft. Wayne Central and myself. We drew numbers and wouldn't you know :I drew #1! The meeting was called to order and I was announced as the first contestant. I became absolutely speechless! I couldn't even think of "Friends, teachers, faculty and opponents" I stood there mute for what seemed minutes, when out of the blue it all came back to me. I had no problem presenting the oration I had prepared. I had chosen "Federal Help in Financing" as a part of my paper. I got a nice round of applause, took my seat and waited while the other contestants did a very good job. John Crane of Central took first place and I got second. No way could anyone from a small school expect to beat Central, the only high school in Ft. Wayne public schools. I returned with my dad although I didn't go with him and he was very proud of my performance. It took a lot of guts to even appear. The next morning the Journal Gazette came out with the story on the front page which read" John Crane from Ft. Wayne Central scored highest and was awarded First Place and will go on to the state contest in Indianapolis in 10 days. Jane Smith of Leo High School was a close runner up and received second place and very honorable mention." My name was Frances E. Hursh!! How could anyone get Jane Smith out of that??? John Crane came up to me after we were finished and said" Frances you did a great job and I'm sure you knew that no matter who represented Central, you couldn't beat them. It's that way in everything, sports or what have you." I wished him luck and we said "nice to have met you " and parted.

On Sunday evening about 5PM, someone wrapped on our front door and I went to the door. Upon opening it who should greet me but Mr. John Crane with a "do you remember me?" "How could I forget you?, I replied. Again he offered his congratulations for my performance at Central. He continued: "My coach told me that your paper was a much better prepared paper than mine and if our places in schools had been reversed, I wouldn't even have gotten a second place. He considered your plan of financing much better than mine.

Now I am asking you if you would help me or loan me your speech so I can alter my original?" "Heck, yes" I said, " I only did it for adventure anyway and I was certain my chances were minimal for winning. John, I won't give it to you but come on in and I'll get it from upstairs and you can select the parts you want. " He came in, went over the paper with a fine-toothed comb and said, "Thanks so very much". He hoped we could be friends, said goodbye and left. He went to state along with 11 other seniors from Indiana and won third place. I received another thank you from him later. I saw him a couple of times that summer and that was it as he left for Northwestern University in Illinois. It was truly a great experience and only one more time in my life do I remember being absolutely speechless and I will relate that later in these memoirs.

The Senior year was growing to a close very rapidly when one morning in English class Mrs. Mershon asked us to turn in our English notebooks. I had not understood that keeping such a book was a necessity and I loved English. I 'm certain I would have followed orders had I known them. Finally when she checked her notes she said" Frances I'm sorry but you were absent three days that week with tonsillitis so I'll go easy on you. Get it up to date by June 15, about a month after school is out and I'll excuse you" I asked my friend Glenn if I could borrow his car to rush home and get what I had already completed. I took it very seriously and had the job almost done before graduation.

Commencement night arrived and ten proud boys and girls marched down the aisle of the Methodist Church in Leo to receive that coveted SheepSkin. I received Valedictorian honors and what a surprise that was. !! Velma was Salutatorian. Mrs. Mershon, after the speaker had finished, ascended the platform and began speaking. The part I will never forget was" Well done, my good and faithful servants.

Here are your rewards" She called each of us to the platform, handed us a diploma and said," I thought I would be so happy and relieved when the class of 1921 finally graduated but tonight I am sad and those tears in my eyes are real. You ten people kept Leo High on its toes and those smiles and belly laughs made my job much easier,"Her husband, the former Superintendent of Leo schools, had died just before graduation in 1920.

I visited her in the Hotel Nursing Home many years later and she repeated: "Your class was one of the most rebellious and ambitious classes ever to leave Leo High and many, many times I wished you pupils were back" To my dad and mom and Mrs. Mershon and other teachers, I owe a lot for I feel I have a good education which no one can ever take from me. Goodbye to L.H.S in early May 1921.

School is out and my mother is quite ill so as the oldest in the family, I needed assume a few more tasks. Although I had been my dad's right hand man on the farm for several years. I could get the fields ready to plant after Dad had plowed them by using the harrow and the float. I drove the horses to plow corn take up hay and all types of men's work. I never objected as who else could be my dad's helper. My brother was 6 years younger than I. Now the task of milking became mine both morning and night as seven cows were standing in stalls waiting for that relief. My dad had stiff hands and fingers due to a rheumatoid condition so he would milk the big older stripper and I would milk the 6 other Holsteins. Each morning I would take the milk to the cheese factory in Leo.

Kathryn who was 2 years younger than I and who was scared to death by even the sight of a cow was supposed to get breakfast ready by the time we came in from the barn but Holy Cow, she was usually just stirring the batter for the pancakes to a tune of the slowest tempo possible. Dad had a hired man awaiting chow so he could get to his farm work-where he should have been an hour ago. My dad farmed more than 200 acres and had two teams of horses, as tractors were unknown to most farmers at that time. Kathryn did everything at the same pace most of her life but was always happy and she could really do more in one hour than many could do in a week. She was a happy person and circumstances never seemed to bother her. I'm very proud to have had and still have her as a sister. She was the one who studied during recess and noon hours and seldom brought home any homework.

She got an A in conduct (deportment) and once -only once-I got a B which was very difficult to explain to parents. . I finally decided that her devotion to her schoolwork probably was good even though I beat her high school average in grades by 3/4 of one percent over the 4-year period.

I took the teacher's exam twice that year and each time the report card came back with great grades only to be written across the top in red ink "too young to teach". Two of my classmates went to college that summer and taught that next year.

During the summer of 1921, our class got together for a couple of class reunions. About a week after school was out Henry Lantz, a classmate from the time I entered Leo School called me for a date. We had always been good friends. Henry and Velma and Al Levy and I had double dated a few times in high school as they also did with Glenn Garman and I.

He asked me to go to a movie in Ft. Wayne with him and two former schoolmates, Opal Witmer and Leonard Krumbigel. We went to the Palace and saw our first talking picture "Running Wild". It starred Harold Lloyd, a well-known comedian of that era. We continued to see each other regularly until about Christmas when all of a sudden I had scarlet fever and Kathryn had diptheria. We had to be quarantined and Henry and I drifted apart. He was in school at Tri State College and later his brother Albert and I double dated with he and Ramona Baron.

Now I must add a bit to my family life. Since our move to near Hurshtown in 1913 a sister and a brother had been added to our family and a sister Mildred had died from peritonitis and an attack of appendicitis. In the beginning of this treatise I spoke often of my attendance at the Missionary Church in Grabill but nothing has been mentioned about my Church attendance after our move to the country. We went very regularly to Sunday School at Springfield Center, a church which my mom attended as a girl and a young lady. But after moving the second time we were much more irregular in Church attendance.

But when I was 12 years old we started going to the Lutheran Church in Spencerville. I joined the young ladies class of more than 15 members which continued to grow. George Beams was our teacher.

I loved Sunday School and always studied my lesson as well as I did my school lessons and how I loved to argue and discuss the lesson on Sunday. His niece Florence kept urging me to teach but that was no choice of mine.

We had a class party at least once a month. At age 16, and Kathryn 14, we were baptized and became members of St. Peter's Church at Spencerville. A membership I held the remainder of my life with the exception of a 5-year leave when we transferred to Grace Lutheran in Ft. Wayne. I was very active at St. Peters. For 6 years we drove from Ft. Wane to Spencerville each Sunday for services after we were married and had children. I'm a bit ahead of my story but I'll continue my Church life while I'm on that subject. Our young men's class while I was in the girls class never had but 2 or 3 young men. Just after graduation Mr. Beams suggested that the girls class invite the young men to accompany us to Trier's Park for a picnic and an evening of fun. I had only been there once just a week or so before with Henry. He and I had gotten on the Roller Coaster and the operator said "Hold your hats and don't stand up". What a thrill that ride became. I even held my breath which was the worst thing anyone could do and we held hands tightly. But the night of the class party I rode it two or three times, yelling as loud as I could and the fear completely disappeared. We had a great time.

At age 15 I began to help in the primary class during opening exercises but always sat in my own class during the lesson. I heard many of the girls in the class talk about George Doll but I had never seen him. I knew his sisters, Josephine and Esther very well as they were in my Sunday School Class. It seems he had been in the Army at Camp Grant, Illinois and had spent a couple of yeas in Colorado on a ranch.

By graduation time my mother and all the children were attending Sunday School at St. Peters. My dad didn't go but he would always attend the ladies class parties and take my mother. Later on I persuaded my dad to go to Church where he was baptized and became an active member.

My mother's health and my age deferred my entrance to college until March 1922. My dad assured each of us a high school education but college would be up to us with all the aid he could give. My uncle Lloyd promised to lend me money for college and he did but when I went to get it he said Frances I'm getting 7 % on my money and Tri State Loan and Trust will loan it to you at 6% and I will sign your note. That was OK with me. However later on I borrowed some from the Spencerville Bank at 6 %

My uncle had a huge beautiful home in Grabill where the Cabinet Company now stands. He said "I can't sell it to the Dutch so I'll tear it down, move it to Ft. Wayne and build 2 houses which he did. Eli Conrad built one on the opposite corner of his house in Grabill much like my uncle and that still is housing a tearoom.

I entered Tri State College in early March, 1922; hoping to take double work and have one year credits in 6y months, which I did. At that time Tri State was an engineering and teachers training school only. In the term in which I started there were 800 engineers (to be) in school and about 50 teaches to be. I signed for advanced algebra only to find about 30 fellows and one girl and I. Our teacher was Mr. Russell Handy. He was demanding and allowed no foolishness or tardiness. In fact the door was locked promptly and 7:50 A>M. and you better have a good excuse if you got in the class after knocking on the door. Lois and I were held over in English Class one morning and arrived at the door just in time to hear it locked. We were scared to death almost but thank heavens Miss Parrott had given us a slip saying she overlooked the time and please excuse us. We knocked and Mr. handy opened the door, the guys were laughing and muttering aha!, the girls are late this time, Goody, Goody! We handed him the pink slip, he smiled and said come on we are just ready to start and I must say this excuse is a new one to me. The guys kept asking what is it?? He replied "you need not know as none of you have a 6:50 class. Most of the fellows were federal board men either they or their dads had been in World War One and they were getting their education on federal funds. I loved Math and had some problems with Advanced Algebra but with hard work, some help from Vivian Boykin a doctor's son from Mississippi I mastered it. Each one had an Algebra note book and fellows were always wanting to buy them.

I refused to sell mine and had the luck of having it stolen and, hey \$50 was a lot those days. Ohio and Michigan elementary schools were out before our Indiana schools so at mid-term we had many more young ladies entering Tri State and more at the beginning of the summer term. We had six new girls at the mid-term and two more at the summer term living at 212 So. Darling.

I had a great uncle and his family living on Maumee St. just 2 blocks north of our house. He had male student roomers so no chance of me rooming there. He warned me to not move into Miss Snyder's, as she was an old crank, etc., etc. but he didn't tell me where she lived and I moved there. But she was marvelous to we girls. Her brother lived on the third floor and came in most any hour of the night so curfews for we girls weren't too severe. She treated us like her own daughters and at least two days a week when I came home from morning classes about 9:10 I would find a huge hot home baked biscuit with butter and marmalade awaiting me. (Yeast roll).

Most everyone at Tri State bought a weekly meal ticket at one of the restaurants at a cost of \$4.50 for a \$5.0 ticket and that really covered the week's meals. With the meal ticket we were given a free ticket to the Movie Theater on the West Side of the Circle. I think it was the Brockton. Everyone went to the movies on Monday nite and then we would sing all the way home; sometimes about 25 guys and dolls joined in. In the late spring a new restaurant opened just diagonally across the street at 301 So. Darling. Everyone called it the Greasy Spoon but it was O.K. for a change especially for breakfast. A girl from St. Joe named Dorothy Bowman became a close friend of mine and we ate breakfast in the new cafe between classes. Our breakfasts were always paid for and no one would tell us who was so generous. A young artist from the Philippines finally told us it was he. He came from Royalty and was always dressed in white flannels and a navy blue blazer. We became good friends and corresponded for a couple of years. He was a beautiful writer and a great artist. I never dated him but we were good friends and I loved to hear from him about the Islands and his family.

Two girls from Elkhart moved in for the summer term. Six of us planned our schedules for all morning classes. Those new girls had a car and we went out to Crooked Lake or Lake James a couple of days a week. They went home for weekends and I did also during July and August.

Glenn Henderson who was principal of Woodburn schools took post-grad classes then and stayed with his dad and sister about 2 miles from my folks. Tri State had a good baseball team and since I was a good friend (the one who helped me with Math) I went to all of the games. The playing field was on East Maumee Ave. just a nice walk away. The Cemetery was on the way and very often we walked out there on sunny afternoons, to admire the beautiful trees, plants and flowers.

A walk down the railroad track to Fox Lake on Sunday afternoons was a favorite pastime especially if a nice young man held your hand. On one of those walks I met Laura Smith, a teacher from Butler, who later happened to have our son Davey and daughter Ruthann in the 4th grade at Erwin School in Ft. Wayne. Nature observance was free and the exercise great. Time passed swiftly and school at Tri State for the summer season was coming to an end. I had taken two teachers exams as I had not taken American Literature in High School I feared that test and waited for the next exam which offered English Literature. I passed both with flying colors and great grades. Now it was time to check on the promise of a school given me earlier by Cedar Creek Trustee Frank Klopfenstein of Leo. It was the trustee who chose the teaches with supposedly advice from the Advisory Board.

Home from college in mid August I paid Mr. Klopfenstein a visit to confirm my job and sign a contract. But oh! What a slam in the face when he told me "I have no place for you!" A young lady, Hazel Merrill, (whom I had known all my life) lost her place in Pleasant Township and she had 4 years or more experience and I have been advised to place her in our township. I learned then and there that politics had a great influence on job placements or advancements. My dad was a strong Democrat but vowed to vote for the better man often and really always! The trustee was a dyed-in-the-flesh member of the G.O.P. party as were 3 members of the advisory board. Hazel's dad was a strong Republican who had been the town Marshal of Grabill when I was a kid. I always had a mind of my own and didn't take a "No" for an answer without a why nor a slap in the face without coming back for more. I heard a schoolteacher was needed in the town of Grabill. I quickly made tracks to my youthful stomping grounds and inquired about said job. I was told that the town board with Albert Egly, Chairman hired the teacher.

I wasted no time getting to the bank where Mr. Egly was cashier and made my wants known. He smiled and said "Bad pennies always return. Welcome back to Grabill". He checked my credentials, knew I had no experience and gave me a contract. September through May. (9 months of school although most rural schools had 8 month terms). The contract signed I was ready for business.

The school was located above the corner store. Two rooms were available for use. One fitted for a schoolroom the other for cloak room, storage and playroom. I checked the schoolroom which looked much like the one-room school rooms I had attended as a youth up to the 4th grade. A back door down a fire escape was the access to the toilets and the playground. A large stove sat on one side of the room. I would be the janitor, the fire keeper and the teacher, quite a requirement for an 18 year old girl rather small in stature and no experience. But I was overjoyed and hurried home to break the news to my family and close friends.

But ah and alas! The next day I was told by friends in the know from Leo that a 6 foot, 5 inch man had been run out of that school the previous year. To me that was unbelievable! He had graduated from Leo High about 3 or 4 years previous to my graduation. He finished the term in tears and here comes a girl of 5 ft. to face those supposedly "Monsters". I always was a gutsy, try anything, sort of person so I began to plan how, when and where! Mr. Egly had told me they didn't require their teacher to attend County Institutes for teaches and did not pay them for those extra days. A yearly County Institute of 3 or 4 days duration was held in Ft. Wayne the last week in August and then one Saturday a month throughout the school year. I decided to attend without pay, as I needed all the help I could get and I could always go with my good friend Velma Akey.

And guess what, during that first annual institute I met Ervin Koehlinger, a friend of my old classmate Henry Lantz and a cousin of Velma's. We became very good friends and after his return to Tri State in September we corresponded regularly and had a date whenever he was home in New Haven or visiting in Leo. I even went to Angola to see him a few times. Opening day of school was upon me and here was my strategy: "I'll make those kids love me." That was easy I found out after a few days of school. I was stern in the classroom and on the playground and attempted to teach the 3 R's in the very best way.

After school we would take walks or I would take 5 or 6 kids in my car for a ride in the country. My dad and I had purchased a Ford 4-door sedan. Kids could drive at a very youthful age and 2 kids, Paul and Willard Conrad, could drive their dad's truck. Their dad owned a small farm North West of Grabill on the St. Joe River a mile. We took lunch and went out there, with two parents aiding in transportation and lunch, and picked up bushels of black walnuts.

My dad had a corn Sheller which hulled the walnuts easily and he came to our rescue. After the nuts were hulled we spread them out to dry near an open window in the storeroom. A bad winter day we cracked nuts and had a party. Fun and love paid off. Discipline problems never really happened and believe you me I never ceased to thank God for that.

Nerves got the best of me however and laryngitis became a problem, my mom went with me to school and did the talking while little brother Woodrow played in the sand tale. At that time I had joined a Public Speaking Class taught by Vernon Sheldon at Central High in Ft. Wayne. He instructed us on voice exercises which nearly drove my family up a wall although I practiced upstairs and I overcame the voice problem.

Halloween arrived and I planned a family party. The response was great although such a thing had never been tried before and parents and kids all had a great time. I was encouraged with that. Only about 2 months until Christmas and again I stuck my neck out with a Christmas program and party. The Conrad boys provided the Christmas tree (a top from an evergreen tree on their grandpa Roth's farm just East of Grabill. 18 years old and my first real tee. Another huge successful venture and the boys gave me the tree to take home for my family to enjoy along with the few ornaments we had collected and strings of popcorn and cranberries. It was the first real tree for my family and it was a beautiful large Scotch pine. School was more than 1/2 over and so far, so good.

Back to school after Jan. I and a new boy in the 5th grade arrived (the school had grades 1 through 6). He was taller than I, a lean lanky kid with a big mouth. About two weeks after his arrival I corrected a pupil and at recess I heard him remark "Hey would you let a little squirt like her talk to you like that?"

I knew it, trouble was coming up so I dismissed the kids a bit early and ordered him to remain in his seat. Surprisingly he obeyed; possibly the yardstick in my hands may have been a bit threatening. I ordered him to sit on his hands and brandishing that yard stick in a stern voice I said "Maurice, if I ever hear you say anything like that again I'll use this stick on the seat of your pants and I will not show much mercy either.

Maurice, I like you very much but I came into this school under pressure and no problems have arisen and I will not tolerate you coming here and starting a rebellion. Do you hear me? He hung his head and said "yes". "O.K. go on home right now!" His mother and brother had taken possession of the corner store below our schoolrooms in early January. I went downstairs, introduced myself again to them and related the incident to them, saying "I'm sorry but I was scared about future happenings." Both of them assured me there were no hard feelings and assured me of their support. They explained that Mr. Perkins, the dad had "Creeping Paralysis" (so called then) and was in a wheel chair. Maurice was his support, companion and spoiled brat and was happy I had corrected him. That was a Thursday and oh how I dreaded Friday morning to arrive. Kids came in as usual and about 8:25 Mr. Maurice came strolling in and came directly over to me with a smile on his face said "Frances, would you come to my house Tuesday night for supper and stay all night? I want you to meet my dad. I asked "does your brother know about this?" "Oh, yes, she and Orville my mother want you to come". Later in the day I checked with mom and agreed to be their guest. Never did Maurice show any signs of rebellion again. He was a great student the rest of that year and all through the 6th grade. Many years later he came into the restaurant in Spencerville and loud enough for all there to hear said "Here is the best teacher I ever had and I owe her a lot". I said "thanks but I'm probably the only one who ever called your dare." He continued to say "I meant every word of what I just said for really I hadn't known what the word 'no' really meant before you told me. He was a very successful Insurance man who didn't live nearly as long as I.

Two years at the school in Grabill and I decided to quit teaching but here goes a lot more of happenings in those 2 years. About May 1, 1923 the County Superintendent paid his annual visit to my class room. Oh, we did not know he was coming at that time. The pupils were on their very best behavior and performed well in class. He spent the forenoon observing and making notes.

I asked him to speak to the pupils and he did so for about 15 minutes, thanked them and me for our attention and was on his way. In about 10 days I received his report on my performance. He gave me 90% and said this is the highest grade ever given to beginning teaches so Frances you have a good future ahead of you.

Now it was time for teacher's examination I took it and patiently awaited my grades. My friends were all hoping to at least pass which meant an average of 75% in all subjects. But me, I was striving for 95%. The day of waiting was over and when I stopped at the Leo Elementary Velma told me that she and several others had received their grades that day. I didn't wait to get mine when I arrive home but called my mom and when I asked about the card she said "Sorry, you didn't make it". Astounded I said, "I didn't? I can't believe that" Then she continued, "You only received 94.5%." I cried. I missed my goal but then I figured with a success grade of 90% I needed 100% in each exam subject to attain 95% average. I was more disappointed than a couple who were rejoicing that they had even passed.

At the close of my second year of teaching we had another picnic for parents, kids and friends. I bid the kids good bye and had told the school board two months before that I wouldn't be back.

Mr. Akey, Cedar Creek Township Trustee, offered me a school but I had fallen deeply in love the year before and changed my plans for the future. During the spring of 1923 I was wearing Mr. Koehlingers Lodge Pin and his engineers pin but he was still in College and his dad never allowed him to use his Cadillac and I was beginning to feel bored and neglected. On a Sunday evening the phone rang and a voice at the other end of the line said "This is Cy, how about me coming down and picking you up for the evening? I politely said "no" and hung up the phone. A few minutes went by and the phone rang again. This time the timid voice said this is George Doll and I would love to have your company for this evening. He was the best friend of Mr. Cy. I knew who George was as his sisters and I were in the same Sunday School class and I had seen him a few times go past in a little Red Bug (roadster), blow the horn and speed on.

I didn't even hesitate "yes" but I needs make a trip to Leo first to pick up some dry cleaning friend Hank Lants had picked up for me on Sat. PM. No problem he said I'll be right down and take you to Leo. In a very few minutes he arrived and told me we were to meet his sister Josephine and her boyfriend and Cy and Alice Timmerman for some joy riding. Well that was 6 in the car, 4 in the back seat so my only place to ride was on George's lap. I apologized for probably being heavy to which he said OH No!

To sort of ease the weight he was holding I frequently kissed him on his eyelids, Top that can you? We drove around for a while then stopped at Webb's Restaurant and Ice Cream Parlor in Spencerville. The other 4 didn't want to go in so we bid them farewell and had ice cream by ourselves, got into the little red bug and went home. We sat in the porch swing and talked for quite a long time. He needed to drive back to Ft. Wayne that night and I needed to be ready by 8:00 am to go to Indianapolis for Sunday School Convention the next day. We kissed good bye (you say, on the first date?) and he asked to see me again on the coming Saturday night. I said O.K. without any hesitation whatever. My week of Monday - Friday in Indianapolis was a busy one. Listening to prominent speakers and Sunday School workers riding in 2 parades and meeting new friends was a memorable one. On Friday P.M. I bid Mr. and Mrs. Koch (Charles & Wife) and Stanley Means good bye and arrived home tired but happy and inspired. That evening I went with my dad and little brother to Spencerville where dad got a haircut and I reported to Frank Beams Lutheran Sunday School Superintendent on the Convention. George Doll was in town with Cy and had his hand bandaged. He had cut some fingers in a factory mishap on Wednesday of the past week. He asked me to go riding and he would take me home but I refused saying: "I always go home with the guy that brung me" and telling him I'd be very happy to see him the next evening. I was so love struck with Mr. George that I had written Mr. New Haven from Indianapolis telling him I was tired of spending evenings and weekends without him and planned to cut our courtship down a peg or two. He called me and begged me to think it over and I agreed although I knew full well my mind was made up.

Saturday nite arrived and we went to St. Joe, Indiana where his sister Josephine and I decided to take a spin in the little Red Bug. We drove around for a while and upon returning to St. Joe we wee stopped by the town Marshall, Mr. Wid Williams and threatened with a ticket for driving with only one head light.

We were very unaware of the fact as I had been driving on dim and didn't know the bright was gone on the right light. But St. Joe's most eligible bachelor, Elgin Curie, came to our rescue demanding Mr. Marshal leave us alone and that he would assure our getting the light repaired at once. Poor Elgin, he had the heart of an angel but never fared too well in love. Girls liked him but that was about it. The evening came to an end and Josephine and Harold went their way and George and I headed for Hursh's.

We were home a while and we were sitting in the porch swing having a slight argument over the events of the evening I guess when I said "hey if we are going to argue then lets do it over a subject more worth while, such as, and before I could complete the sentence friend George said lets argue over getting married. I repeated "getting married?" and nearly fell out of the porch swing. He said, "Frances I came down to Eck Hursh's to get me a wife. I've watched you for a long time but never had nerve enough to call you until last Sunday and I mean it. Will you Marry Me?" I believe it shocked me so badly that I said "Well, Yes" without hardly thinking about it. Then I proceeded to tell him about Mr. Koehlinger and our status. He paid no attention to my ifs or ands and repeated his request. I said "George I truly believe in love at first sight, but never believed it could happen to happy go lucky me, but I'll consider it to the fullest of my ability and will answer you next weekend. He was not working because of his hand and on Wednesday nite he came down again for an answer. We started dating regularly and everything was honey and roses until the last Saturday night in August when we agreed to disagree and George left after I threw his car keys away and he had to hunt them in the dark while crying I stomped into the house, and hurried upstairs to bed. Sunday morning after Sunday School I was tempted to go out to his house and rout him out to beg him to forget and forgive but I stayed for Church and resisted the temptation. School started the next Monday a week away and I was too busy to sob or cry. I went with the stream dating two or 3 guys once and did things with my family but forgetting wasn't easy.

The last Saturday in September was Teachers Institute in Ft. Wayne and Josephine, George sister, asked to ride home with me. She was attending Business College at the time. When we got to my home I offered to take her home but she refused saying her dad was awaiting a call to come for her. She made the call and very soon a car pulled up but it wasn't her dad, it was his son George. On the porch I awaited for her leaving and a sweet voice yelled, "Hi, how are you?" Without even turning around I said Fine and went inside the door and slammed it as Josephine called "See you later in St. Joe".

I took mom and siblings to St. Joe that night for the band concert while walking down the street whom did I meet? You guessed it, Mr. G.R. himself smiling and saying, "Would you let me take you home tonight?" George, I replied, I'm sorry but I brought my family up here and my sister isn't a good enough driver to take them home. Well then, he asked, may I follow you home? I guess, but hey, I don't like tail chasers! Don't get too close. Truly I wondered if he would come down afterwards. I took the gang home soon as traffic cleared out a bit. It seemed hours and no Mr. Doll had appeared but really I'm certain I was over anxious. In actually a few minutes he came up on the front porch and rapped on the door. I opened the door and in he came, put his arms around me in the hall and with tears in his eyes said, "I've waited so long for this? I had to admit I had the same feelings. We had questions, statements and promises. I admitted that I had said if I even heard of you going out with 2 certain girls I'd never even speak to you again and I knew you didn't. He told of going back to an old girl friend but all feelings were gone Ha, I thought. Of course he asked about New Haven's Lothario and I told him nothing happened there although I felt much like being humble and begging him to so do! That's a joke too – The reunion was great! He stayed late and came back the next P.M. was even in Church on Sunday A.M.

Now we were really in love and he came every weekend and often a night during the week although that meant more than a 40-mile drive and a need to be at the G. E. at 7:20 the next morning. He gave me a diamond for Christmas and we began counting months, days and hours until we could say good night with a hug and kiss every night. That day finally arrived on June 21, 1924.

After securing a Marriage License on Saturday morning following my dad's permission to George for my hand in Matrimony, we were married Saturday P.M. at 2 o'clock by Rev. Steffey in the Lutheran Parsonage in Spencerville with the Steffey family Mrs., Lillian and Kermit as witnesses. We left at once for an overnight honeymoon after visiting his parents and promising to come there with my family for dinner the following day. We got stuck in the freshly graveled alley between the Church and the Parsonage but eluded a few guys who were attempting to follow and stop us. We headed on our 25-hour honeymoon to Hamilton Lake. No room was available at the Hotel but we were referred to a private home where a sweet lady rented us a comfortable, nicely furnished room with a neatly made comfortable bed. A trip to a local restaurant and a boat ride on Hamilton Lake completed our evening.

Sunday about 11:00 A.M. we arrived at George's parents for a day of pictures and fellowship with our parents. We went to my parent's home about 4 P.M. where we planned to go to Children's Meeting at the Church and then spend the night. At the last minute we passed up the kids program for an evening alone. One of the worst thunderstorms I have ever witnessed occurred that evening.

Early Monday morning we were off to Ft. Wayne bright and early as George reported for work at 7:20 A.M. in the Carpenter Shop, Bldg. 10 of Broadway G. E. I laugh when I think about George's mother giving him a long white night shirt before we left on Saturday P. M. Well it would have been handy to find under his pillow in case of a fire or earthquake. I bought a morning paper and after spending the forenoon down town I took a streetcar to the G. E. where I met George in the GE Park. I walked downtown that afternoon and at 4:20 George met me at his old rooming house at 1817 South.Harrison. I found an ad for housekeeping apartment at 2417 south Harrison which we immediately checked out. The landlady Mrs. Goddin showed us the 1 room and kitchenette furnished apartment and a shared bathroom across the hall. The rent was \$6.00 per week and we snatched it up. George moved his clothes from 1817 to 2417 and the next evening we made a trip to my parents for linens, etc. The apartment was completely furnished and bed linens furnished. It wasn't a palace but we were very happy there.

Had laundry facilities in the basement which we shared with 3 other couples; no problem there and each couple upstairs shared the bathroom and its cleaning. Mrs. Goddin cleaned it once a week. I often took lunch and shared it with George in the G. E. Park where band concerts and other entertainment was available almost daily. George played Horseshoe and I was a very enthusiastic spectator, in fact I learned to love the competitive contest. I had a lot of time on my hands so when the lady next door learned I had taught school she asked me to tutor her two sons 3 hours for each boy per week. One was a sophomore and the other a junior at South Side High School. Both had English problems and I loved English so we got along fine. The lady in the front apartment and I decided we ought to get a full time job as school opening drew near. We were hired at the Telephone Company as local operators. We worked three days without even telling our husbands as our hours and theirs worked out fine.

The third day they asked us for birth certificates. The fact that we were both married should have convinced them we were 16 years old at least, but no, we needed a birth certificate. I could find none as birth records were not mandatory of doctors until 1910 and I had none. She was born in Lansing, Michigan and she had none either so we quit being "Hello Girls".

While tutoring the boys next door I met Mrs. Sutton who was the Millinery Assistant Manager at W. & D.'s. department store. The Millinery Dept. there was a leased department by Lechins of New York City. She said their office girl had quit and they needed help badly. I said O.K> I'll try it however that meant working 8:30 - 5:30. George agreed for me to try it. Well I nearly gave up that job also. It required a weekly inventory, a very complicated one as to price, color, materials and style. I tried for a couple weeks and the records were so bad I simply couldn't get a good inventory although the clerks did an excellent job of keeping the tickets from the hats. I finally called (or my boss did) from the New York Office and asked them to send me a correct up to date inventory sheet as of the next Sat. night. From that time on it was great and she and I could go and come together. The job of figures I loved, and it was my job to ticket all the new merchandise and I really learned a lot about Merchandising. We would divide a shipment of hats into thirds, mark a very few \$5.00, twice that many 410.00, more at 15.00 and the remainder at 25.00. In 6 weeks all that hadn't sold would be re-priced and finally sent to the basement department for 5.00 each.

My Boss was Mr. Sol Frank from New York City. He was a kind, caring Jew from all sense of the word, capable, efficient, not demanding but one who respected his help and expected good work in return. An early telephone call from Mr. Bob Gollmer, my husband's boss at the G.E. made me realize just how caring Mr. Frank really was. I was told that George had an accident and after first aid had been rushed to St. Joseph Hospital where I learned the G. E. had a 4-bed room leased by the year. I said "I'll come right away". Mr. Frank asked about the call and said to me: "Frances, I didn't drive to work this morning so I will call a cab for you but you are not going along. I'm going with you". Arguing against that was fruitless so to the hospital we rushed. I was nervous, scared and practically in tears when we arrived in the 1st floor room where George lay in a bed next to the window. He looked up at me and smiled saying "Honey, I'm OK".

I requested they throw those fingers away but no such thing happened. I raised the covers and looked in and George was lying in a small pool of blood.

Mr. Frank called quickly for a nurse and one come rushing in saying they were ready to take him to surgery., which they did immediately. I told Mr. Frank to go back to the store that I would be OK but he insisted on staying which he did until George was brought back to the room. He left but with this order: "My wife and I will pick you up this evening when you are ready to go home. He gave me his telephone number at home and said please call my wife if you wish to go earlier, also he said I have ordered a snack for you now and dinner at 5:30. He put his arm around me, said a prayer in "yiddish" and left. Can you imagine a 20 year old new bride of a few months along in that room. Another G.E. employee , Orrin Zecher, was in the bed at the end of George's and he tried to make me comfortable. The nurse came in and out every few minutes. At that time (1924) ether was the only available anesthetic in use and extreme nausea often followed its administration. George would rally every few minutes and say "Nurse", where's my wife, where's my watch, and I'm hungry". She would do her best to comfort him and off to sleep he would go. But about 2 P.M. he was quite awake and still demanding food, so the sweet little Nurse said "George, what do you want to eat" and he replied "two boiled eggs". I almost fainted. We never had boiled eggs.

I didn't like them and never thought of fixing them for him. O.K. she said, we will get them and to me, "be prepared, for now way can he keep them down". But alack and alas, he consumed them like a starving animal when they arrived and no vomiting. Surprise, Surprise to all of us. The surgeon was Dr. Rosenthal, a Jew. The helper Dr. Lohman, a Catholic and the Anesthetist a Mormon. What a collection. Dr Rosenthal said to me: "now little lady, I feel we have done a good job and everything should be O.K. but those small cords in those fingers could be a problem. Now I will keep you informed! Days went by and no word from any doctor, one noon I caught up with both Rosenthal and Lohman and began asking why or when? He said I told you I would tell you so please keep that in mind. Two or three days later another call to me at the store, this one from the doctor. He simply said "Mrs. Doll could you come to the hospital now?" Oh Yes, I'll be right there.

Mr. Frank heard the conversation on another phone and quickly said to me "I have my car and I will take you to the hospital, which he did. This time I was more scared than the first time I was called. He was a good driver and it was only about 12 or 14 blocks away but it seemed we would never get there. Once there and in the room the Doctors were standing by the bed, Dr. Rosenthal said we have completed the wrappings and are ready for you to see the uncovered hand.

I feared to open my eyes and really look but God had been good to us and guided the surgeons hands and the fingers were attached, almost healed and blood was flowing through them according to the X-ray picture. A few more days and I'm sure movement will begin to be seen soon. I hugged George, kissed him and tried to hide the tears. Mr. Frank said "George I'm so glad for and Frances, she has been a very patient wife and I know she loves you very much." To me he said take the rest of the day off but I refused and returned to the store with him and riding back to the Hospital that evening with him on his way home. The healing process was a slow one and George remained in the hospital for a total of 5 weeks. How happy we both were to have him back at the apartment, however he had come home twice during his hospital stay for about an hour. George had a good friend who as a young lad was a neighbor but who had married and lived in Ft. Wayne. He was a conductor on street car line #11. He also drove a cab on his hours off. He stopped in to see George soon after the accident and gave us his schedule and I was able to ride that line every night at 7:00 or 8:05 if he had the cab he would take me home so I never feared travel at night.

His name also was George (George Goings). I continued to work every day and George read, slept and walked while I was gone. Time passed and by Dec. 20th he was back to work and we were so happy.

Mr. Sol Frank was so great to work for but his supervisor Mr. Henry Frank, a huge man from the New York office, was a regular "Ogre" and I often said if he ever comes here as a manager I'm leaving. It happened in late January and I did just that, however I worked extra for W. and D. itself for a while.

Apartment living was OK but young kids in their 20's hated to see all their money going down the drain as rent and we decided to build a house. George had bought a lot on Winter St. and one near Foster Park before we were married.

I found an ad about Ready Cut houses made by Aladdin in Bay City, Michigan and sent for a catalog. When it arrived we spent all of our spare time choosing something we could afford. We found a plan for a 5 room bungalow complete and shipment included for \$499.00 By that time George was earning 60¢ an hour and that was almost tops at the G.E. and I made \$15 to \$20 per week.

We ordered the house to be shipped in May and decided to use the lot on Winter St. as the other lot required a much more elaborate house. We had the lot graded, a foundation constructed after our good friend Frank Rhodes dug the cellar and did all the ground work. George took a week off and with the good help of my dad and a hired helper the house became a reality. It was only single construction so that meant no undersiding however we decided to buy undersiding and make it double construction., which made it more valuable and as my dad said "much more comfortable to live in". Construction in a complete form was rather prolonged. The outside was all done and painted and it looked fine. By now I was pregnant and so happy but nearly every day I went out to the new house and tacked on wood lath on the side walls. We both worked evenings, Saturdays and Sundays until we were ready for the plasterer. George knew a Mr. Wearley whose parents we both knew, who was a plasterer. We contacted him and he did the job. The walls cracked a bit but he repaired them, we cleaned the floors with much help from our parents and moved in the place in early September. My baby was due Oct. 17th.

On a snowy Oct. 10 we called the doctor and after an examination he said if you don't have that baby in the next 24 hours you will probably deliver on the expected date. :How right he was. On Friday afternoon Oct. 16 I began having slight pains and my water broke. I insisted I was OK the next morning and George went to work In the meantime I walked to the grocery store, went to the neighbors, even drank a small glass of cider while there and never mentioned what had happened

At 11:00 am George came home as he was too uneasy to work. I was still OK but he wasn't home very long until the pains grew harder, lasted longer and were closer. In the meantime his mom and dad arrived. George had built a chimney but it was not quite finished and he needed to top it to complete it.

It was a cold, rainy day with wind and blowing snow when the doctor arrived. Up on the roof and down was George and to top it off he dropped his trowel down the chimney but after hard work he retrieved it and the chimney was finished. George came in the house to stay with me. The cider caused extreme nausea, the water had broken 24 hours before, it was a dry birth and I truly had a rough time. I had planned for a boy and most everything I made or bought was blue. We had planned to call him Robert Lee after a little boy I had in school who was very dear to me, and whose dad was a good friend of my dad, and a fellow worker while I was little.

George truly wanted a girl and said so the entire 9 months I was pregnant. In the beginning he thought we should wait a while before thinking about a child. All my life I had problems each month and the doctor told me that a successful pregnancy might solve that problem. I pushed George for such although he truly wanted to wait but as usual gave in to my wishes. The baby arrived at 4:00o pm and it was a girl!! Now daddy was really happy and he almost screamed "This is It". No more will she ever go through this again. Dr. Rossitter said "don't say never for that is really a long time." He said "why don't you call her Roberta Lee?" " No, we have a name for a girl, Ruthann:." I was disappointed and even sang "you're cute, you're sweet, your daddy's pride and joy, but your momma wanted a baby boy". How nasty could I be? I was so proud of her although her head was so out of shape due to a long delivery but that soon was OK too. George's mom stayed for the night and brought my mom and a lady, a distant cousin of grandma Doll down on Sunday morning. Two proud grandma's indeed and a large kind of lady with a daughter married and a grandson.

She gave me wonderful care and stayed four weeks with me. She was a tall lady and wherever she put up a hook to hang something on it was way above my reach. She cared for me and little Ruthanna with u tmost efforts. The doctor let me get up after two weeks. I sat up in the chair for about 15 minutes and George carried me back to bed. About 2:30 pm I began to hemmorage, the man who lived behind us had a light as he went to work about 3:20. We had no telephone so George rushed over there and called Dr. Rossitter, he was up and had just returned from a surgery. He arrived soon and although quite surprised at the bleeding said it can happen and explained why and ordered bed rest for a few more days.

Time passed and I was OK up and ready to take on raising a little girl who had her days and nights mixed much like her mother who never changed yet. At about 5 weeks I decided it was time for her to go to sleep by 9 pm. She wasn't hungry, her diaper was dry and it was bed time. I asked George to go into the front bedroom as he needed his sleep and I would put her basket in our bed room and hope she decided to sleep. Well she screamed for what seemed like ages and fell asleep, waking only once during the night. The next night it took only about 15 minutes and by the third night , she went to sleep without crying and George moved back onto his old bed with me

She was a great joy to both of us and the German neighbors to the south loved her like their own and were always offering to keep her while I ironed or went grocery shopping or just rested a few minutes.

Ruthanna was a very sweet little girl and was her dad's pride and joy. She was little and her dad held her while we watched a parade even when she was six years old. When she was 2 yrs. , we went to Turkey Run State Park in southern Indiana. It was and is still is a very picturesque vacation spot. We stayed in the Inn and enjoyed a 3 day weekend there.

All of our friends had children older than she and also being an only Grandchild ,she could have been spoiled rotten. My parents had a small country store and gas station and if we said "no" to some request, our friends would say "give it to her, we'll pay"" but she was not spoiled by all the attention .

My parents attended the Farmers Market on Barr St. in Fort Wayne and later were charter members of the South Side Farmers Market. They came to market on Friday night and often would take her home with them to stay until Sunday . I had two younger sisters under 16 yrs. Who really took care of her, even taking her to the outdoor toilet regularly.(often to avoid dishes or such) and she was potty broke at a very young age. Her going to the grandparents gave George and I the opportunity to go to a show. We often chose the Lyric Theater which presented "Girly" shows --a bit risqué but entertaining. Of course we hoped to see no one there we knew, but one night we sat directly behind Maude and Frank Beams, dear friend of ours and of our parents.

They were a bit embarrassed but we laughed it off. They were as old as our parents and had kids our age.

When Ruthanna was 4 yrs old, I got Diptheria and we were quarantined. The nurse came in and fixed lunch for me while there but not for her or her Dad. He couldn't boil water without burning it. He finally was able to cook oatmeal which they practically lived on ..To this day, she can't eat oatmeal. Finally after about 10 days I could get up for a few hours. I boiled potatoes and opened a can of Salmon and they thought it was a feast. My dad was a good cook and a great baker so I took it for granted that all men could cook. In later years, George did a good job with Tuna on Toast and a few other items.

For a couple of years previous to the bout of Diptheria. I kept boarders: my brother, step-sister and a friend, all who worked at the G.E.. But I had just said "this is it" before Diptheria occurred. Luckily no one got it from me although Ruthanna and her dad were given preventative shots.

We had just purchased a new 6 cylinder Chevy sedan of which we were very proud. George took a weeks vacation and with a holiday weekend we took a trip through Ill, Iowa, and up to St Paul and Minneapolis for a couple of days..

Then we ferried across Lake Superior into Michigan and after a stay at Rice Lake, back to Indiana.

Time went quite rapidly and it was now time for our only child to go to kindergarten. In the meantime we transferred our church membership from Spencerville to Grace Lutheran in Ft Wayne. The women of the church at Grace were busy people and I became involved in their activities. Ruthanna made many new friends in Sunday School there. Grace had a good school but we preferred public school and sent her to John S Irwin, a new school at Oxford and Anthony. She loved school and started in the afternoon for one semester;' then it was morning classes and she hated to get up but after a short time everything was back on schedule... I got involved in PTA work and enjoyed it a lot. I was study group chairman, flower chairman, secretary, and finally president of the PTA.

It's Oct. 1931 and Ruthanna was now 6yrs old. She had attended several birthday parties and now it was her turn. The kids had a great time and my sister Helen came down for the party. That evening Ruthanna said "It was fun but I am always the only kid that has no brothers or sisters. Why?" "If you don't do something, I'm going to the hospital and get one myself. . On July 9, 1932 Davey Lee was born. (both babies chose Saturday afternoon at 4PM) He was a cute, big dark-eyed 7lb 4oz baby and we all three were very proud of his arrival.

He grew up fast and also started to kindergarten at age 5 1/2 yrs. He was a depression baby . and George was on part time at the GE. T'was no such thing as unemployment" compensation then. . The GE had its own plan if you earned less than \$15 per week , you were provided groceries.

George made just that but when insurance ,etc, was taken out, he had about \$12 left. Our home was paid for and our furniture and car so we went to the country and planted a large garden of potatoes and corn and most everything that could be canned or stored. We managed to live although we used all our savings and skimped to make ends meet. But times got better and George was back on full time with better pay.

Now we needed a new car and we bought a Studebaker Rockne--one of the first cars to have switch-key ignition--no more starters. That was great except in zero weather .!

Davey would be 6 yrs old in July and we decided to go to California. He had finished kindergarten and Ruthanna was in high school.-- having skipped one semester, she was a mid-term student. We had a great trip--no problem except one flat tire on the way. We stopped in Flagstaff to visit friends and really enjoyed the Ozarks, Texas, and New Mexico, successfully crossing the desert into Needles, Calif. In the daytime heat. We checked through Barstow where we were frisked for plants or fruit. We decided to go on to Kingsburg that evening where we found our relatives, the Schlatters, without any problems. George went to the door and asked if it would be possible to stay over night. They did not know him and said they didn't take in strangers. He asked them to come out to the car and they did so reluctantly.

They were a bit suspicious tho because they had heard we might visit California. What a happy greeting that was! We spent several days in Kingsburg picking apricots, etc. What a treat and we took some with us for our trip home. They made a good snack and the bears in Yosemite loved them. We left July 3rd and started north to San Francisco., At the Golden Gate Bridge was a beautiful park and zoo which we all enjoyed . It was cold that day so we only walked a bit in the ocean. We spent the night east of Frisco and then were on our way back east. We spent Davey's 6th birthday in Iowa.. After Frisco (backtracking) we went to Reno where a huge rodeo was in motion. We got tickets and was looking over the horses when Ruthanna fainted--too much heat and altitude, I guess. We took her to the nurses tent and soon she was OK. We had bought Davey a large red cowboy hat which he loaned to his sister during rodeo performance. It was a great rodeo.! About 5:30 we departed going east out of Reno toward Salt Lake . We were driving down a street lined with divorce parlors .

George stopped the car and said" OK this is your last chance--take it or forever forget it" I just leaned over , gave him a kiss and said" drive on fast before I change my mind.

We spent a day in Salt Lake City but we didn't get into the Mormon Tabernacle because our kids were too young. We spent three days in Gypsum, Colorado with the Frank Dolls.

The trip was very memorable, including a stop at the Clifford VanZiles in Selma but we were glad to get home.

George worked everyday at the GE and on weekends we went to the farm in Spencerville. Quite often during the week, the Bauermeisters next door, Ruthanna and Davey and I would take a picnic lunch and our little red wagon to the park on Oxford and Hanna street where the kids would have a circus on all the playground equipment. Weiser Park was a great place for kids then. But now it's trouble .

McMillen Park opened about that same summer. I would have supper ready when George got home at 5:10. We would eat, do dishes and off the park only a 5 or 6 block walk, get some peanuts and then enjoy a softball game , sometimes a polish dance, or a band concert. Those were truly the good old days.

School opened in September. Davey was in grade 1 and Ruthanna in South Side High, a Freshman. I spent lots of time at the schools, having taken Davey while in the buggy for a long time. School was old Time to him by the time he started and in the 2nd grade he had many problems, coming home for lunch every day in tears. A call to Mr. Wolf the principal and a talk with Miss Arnold every thing worked out fine. I began to feel I had too much time on my hands so I tried for a part time job at Stillman's and was hired in the Men's Department. Mrs. Hege who was a widow living one block from us and with a large family acted as my sitter for Davey and I rather enjoyed the part time job.

In 1941 we decided to build a house on the farm which we had owned for several years and where we had already built a barn and a garage house. Electricity wasn't available to us although everyone around us already had it.

In March 1942 we got electricity almost at once, after writing to the War Production board. Our house was all wired ready and we hooked up to the line, had all of our home floor finished and moved in for good. Ruthanna finished that year at South Side. A few days after moving to the country the store Stillman's called my husband at work asking me to come in on a Wednesday to work for a special sale.

It was the custom if sales were a flop extra help went home but they promised my husband that would not affect me. I went in on Wednesday morning. It rained hard all day and little business, however I was given an old age inventory sheet and told to stay and come back tomorrow. Six weeks went by and I was working every day so I took a trip to see Mrs. Irma Brown the personnel Manager. I asked about my status and she answered we want you to work regularly but were hesitating to ask you. "Oh", I said , "OK but I must have two weeks off to get my new house furnished and ready to live in. She granted that and I worked there until late in the year 1946 when I decided to leave as George no longer worked at G.E. In the meantime Ruthanna had entered Spencerville High School and had graduated in 1943. She entered Nursing school at the Lutheran Hospital and graduated in Aug. 1946, and was married a few days after graduation. Her husband, Jim Maxwell, who had returned from service in Italy in the late fall of 1945, was working in Ft. Wayne when they married

He soon secured a job in South Bend with a good friend from Auburn, Dale Cosper. He went to South Bend to live. Ruthanna stayed in Ft. Wayne until she had taken State Board Nursing Examination, and passing, moved to South Bend. Davey was in High School now. Each day after Ruthanna entered Nurses Training we treasured Davey more. Our nest would really have been empty without him. George's health was not the best and one thing led to another over many years until in 1947 he was put on a very strict diet and his health improved rapidly as we abided by that diet to a T. We had sheep on the farm for many years and then changed to cattle. Davey had chores to do each evening and if I had things prepared for the oven, supper would be done or on it's way when I arrived home. I got tired of working in a local grocery store in Spencerville and went back to work at Stillman's in early 1949. George was self employed as a carpenter and cabinetmaker and fished and hunted a lot. In the spring of 1949, knowing Davey would be out of school the next year, we decided to take another trip West. I wrote for tickets to Roundup Days in Cheyenne, Wyoming. George, Davey and I headed for the Black Hills in Dakota. George had been there while on various hunting trips in Wyoming. Just the three of us.

I had begun to realize the family was getting smaller and smaller although a sweet little grand daughter, Ann Elise, had arrived at the Maxwell's in 1947. We went from Cheyenne to Salt Lake City and on west to L.A. We visited the Rose Bowl in Pasadena and headed North through Oregon to Washington.

In Seattle, Washington we ferried across to a small island and then ferried again to Victoria Island, Canada. After a couple of days in Canada we departed for the U.S., planning a stop in Yellowstone National Park. We stopped in Cody, Wyoming and on to Yellowstone. The entrance at the North was snowed in so we went to the South East gate. We had already visited Glacier National Park and Mt. Ranier and now Yellowstone. All three were great but I believe Ranier was the most beautiful. Two days in Yellowstone and we needed to head East as my vacation was coming to and end. Davey did odd jobs for farmers during that summer and often helped his dad. Soon it was back to school. He never played Basket Ball as he was too small but was Cheer Leader one year. We attended all the Basket Ball games at home and away. I was P.T. A. President and my first job was to get the High and Grade Schools painted and cleaned up. The boys washed the windows and kids were surprised to see sunshine casting shadows in the room.

We had paper drives, served meals and a bit of everything possible to secure funds for re-decorating the school and improving the town hall., adding a kitchen and bathrooms to the hall. I worked full time in the Men's Dept. at Stillman's and remained active in P. T. A. at the Spencerville school. Davey Lee was now a Sophomore at Spencerville High School. He was a great help at home. He did the chores. We had cattle and that meant stanchions to clean and animals to feed. We no longer milked cows but had done so while rationing was in effect. Davey always turned the milk separator and his dad milked one Guernsey and I churned the butter and washed the separator. As George was on a strict diet much of his life Davey made sure his dad's special foods were ready when I came from work. The year passed very quickly. Davey got his beginners driving license and drove his Dad's work car but a poor mechanic did a lousy job on the car and a wreck followed. Luckily no one was hurt and we bought another used car for George's work and Davey's driving. May came too soon. It was graduation time and Davey had decided to join the Navy. He graduated and left for the Navy on May 20, 1950. He graduated from Spencerville 30 years after his dad did.

He left Ft. Wayne by bus to Indianapolis and after an extended exam, tests, and instructions boarded a train for the Great Lakes Naval Training Camp near Chicago. He left a sweetheart, Arden, and sad parents at the bus station saying "See you in 12 weeks." We visited him at the camp and Arden and I went to graduation.

The Korean War was in full swing and circumstances altered many plans. He graduated in 9 weeks on one of the hottest July Saturdays I can remember. Arden and I told him good bye at the train station in Chicago and hoped to see him in 3 weeks, but no such luck. I had chaperoned a group of girls at Hamilton Lake for a 3 day weekend. When Dorothy Vendrely came up on Sunday to take the girls home, I mentioned the hurricane on the east coast where I knew Davey had been sent a week before and Dorothy said "Davey is on his way to Korea" What a shock that was.. When I got home I asked George about it but he knew nothing. He recalled that the Chaney's had acted funny at church when Davey's name was mentioned. Davey had called Arden before leaving as he could not get an answer at home. My brother Woodrow was there and said "that's crazy--they would never send a kid with 9 weeks training out of the country"

On Monday morning official word came from Uncle Sam that he was aboard the USS Missouri bound for Korea. The hurricane had hit the ship while in the Panama Canal and they had no drinking water and other repairs to the ship were needed so 3 or 4 days were spent there and then on to Korea. We heard from him regularly and were always on pins and needles because of the prolonged fighting on land and water around Seoul. He spent Christmas(his first away from family) in the harbor of Seoul as did Vic Timmerman ,a friend. On the USS Missouri they made homemade tree trimmings and celebrated on Dec. 26th when the shelling had ceased temporarily. He went on R&R in Japan and that was quite an experience for him. The winter passed and in early summer he returned to Long Beach,Cal. . Thinking he would get a furlough, I didn't fly out there, but again plans changed. He was given a choice: 30 days back home and then out on a ship again or a deferred furlough and a permanent stay at the naval station in Orange, Texas until discharge. He chose the latter. We visited him in the summer. He got a weeks leave and we went to Galveston. We had a motel on the banks of the Gulf where we enjoyed shrimp and fish like we had never had before. George and Davey swam while I sat on a stone and got the worst sunburn I had ever had I had to sleep 2 nights sitting in front of the air conditioner.. We visited the Alamo and many other points of interest on the three trips we made to Orange, Texas.

In November 1951,the night before my mother died, he arrived home for a 30 day furlough. Ruthanna and little Ann, now a tot in kindergarten, visited us and were there at Spencerville when we took him back on a cold ,cold night for a trip back to Texas.

George and I had never had a real honeymoon although we had been married 27 years. In January 1951 we took a trip to Florida and boarded a ship for Cuba. Batista had just taken over as ruler of Cuba and democracy was in its infancy. Havana was a beautiful old city and its buildings were gorgeous.--the Capitol building especially. No cameras were allowed inside the building. It had a marble floor on the main floor which was 7 or 8 steps above street level. A huge onyx polygon was part of the floor and in it was the largest cut diamond in the world. A heavy railing surrounded it. The whole place was awesome and unbelievable. The people were poor, and timid but happy although they lived like peasants. We had a cab driver called George Gonzales who took us anywhere we wanted to go or else he sent a buddy to the hotel for us.

We couldn't speak Spanish so when we got lost it was a real problem . After asking directions of 3 different officers who spoke broken English "where is the Havana Biltmore and how do we get there?" and each one gave us different directions , I looked to our left and saw the sign-- we were only three blocks from the hotel! The hotel was in downtown Havana. Just a few blocks from the shops and the markets. We went to Morro Army base and castle, to the pineapple farm and to the Tropicana nightclub. It had a glass restaurant with a tree growing through the middle of it. We had bought a tour package from the purser on the ship over. It covered everything where we went special. Meals and transportation were up to us but taxis were reasonable and food was excellent -if you didn't eat in the hotel. Speaking of transportation,, we were told by Mr. Gonzales if we took a taxi downtown not to give the driver more than \$1 per passenger. Fine, so five of us got in a cab for downtown. The driver never spoke a word of English on the way but when he stopped to leave us out he said in the best of English "One dollar and a half each please". We said "oh no" and gave him \$5 and \$1 for a tip.

Can you imagine driving down 6-lane Biscayne Boulevard in Miami, Fla. And seeing a car with 17A Auburn license plate on it? I recognized them as the Shoemakers from Waterloo and I was so excited I almost caused George to have a wreck Now a bigger surprise: as we got on the ship and started to our cabin, who were the first people we met? Ah yes, it was the Shoemakers.

They were staying at the Seville Biltmore as we were. One finds friends wherever you go if you are lucky! Our first place to visit was a huge distillery--a very interesting place with outdoor serving parlor where nail kegs served as seats. Marie Shoemaker got seasick and after finally getting her settled in bed , I decided to look for Shoemaker and George. I found them at the bar with a Washington wheat farmer, having a great time. Although George was not a very good or habitual drinker, the three were drinking cheap whiskey and ice water. I had a Cuba Libre -rum and coke- and joined in the conversation. About 3 PM we went to our cabin for a snooze. The water was rough and splashes came in on our 2nd floor bunks. I slept in the top bunk and loved it. The weekend went too quickly and Monday found us back in Miami ready to go through customs. What an ordeal that was.

I had sales slips for all I had bought but in George's bag was an unopened pack of fruit of the loom T shirts which they questioned until I showed them the price sticker still on the package. After breakfast on the ship which we shared with two bachelors as table partners (they were from Quebec) they took home a lot of liquor on which they had to pay excise tax . That was foolish to me as Canadian whiskey is the finest.

Back in Florida , we went to Hialeah race track. I love horse races but the crowds there were wild and loud. The beautiful pink flamingos walking around the park made the sights unbelievable and the mad crowd bearable. We didn't bet on the horses as the crowds at the betting windows were huge. We drove about 25 miles west of Miami and got a motel. We spent a week in Florida and then back to Indiana. That was our first real honeymoon and with the exception of two years, had an annual one, the last in 1975.

Until 1960, we had rambled all around Florida, but that year we settled in Sarasota and after that it became our final stopping place. South Washington Blvd. Was our vacation home as long as we went to Florida.

Our nest was quite empty with our daughter married and living in So. Bend and our son in the navy. I worked full time . We had a beautiful yard on the farm on road 64 and always had a great garden in the summer. Time went slowly but we were very happy -both of us keeping busy with church work besides our every day chores.

In the summer of 1952, Davey had another 30 day furlough and I took vacation for two weeks to spend time with him, but the second Monday night that he was home we were taking our laundry to my brother's house near Hurshtown and about 2 miles from our destination we were hit broadside by a car full of young people from Ashley who were driving on a strange road. Their car jumped a fence and landed on its side in a field south of the intersection. We had a heavy Buick and the impact jammed and opened the heavy door on the passenger's side, throwing me out into a ditch. (no seat belts in those days). I was lying in a bed of poison ivy. A friend came by shortly and called the ambulance. I was conscious at first and talked to a couple of people who stopped. My head was bleeding and very soon I passed out and didn't awaken until we were on Clinton St. near the old Centlivre Brewery in Ft. Wayne. I awoke and asked "where am I?"

The answer:" you're on your way to the hospital". I said I wanted to go to the Lutheran and was told that was where we were headed. The doctor had already been called. I was admitted to the emergency room and then on to x-ray. What an ordeal that was!! The technician was in a wee little room with a sliding window and I was on a table with a hard top like marble. She was sweet and kind and would come out to me with sand bags which she moved then back into the little room and through the window would say "Now don't move and don't breathe" Try that for a period of at least 17 min off and on. Then back on the cart for a return to the emergency room where Dr. Rossiter was waiting. His first order was for a tetanus shot. I quickly said "no horse serum" as I had never forgotten what happened to me when I took antitoxin for diphtheria and neither did he. He went to the lab and got the serum himself and gave it to me. He then proceeded to sew up the cut on the left side of my head. Next was a reading of the x-rays. He came back with the report of no broken bones but several cracked ribs on the left side.

That meant a lot of tape --only to find out later I was allergic to tape, but too late to do anything about it. After 6 days in the hospital, I demanded to go home The doctor was gone for the weekend and the nurse said she would sign a release if I promised to come into the office on Monday. I promised faithfully

On the night of the accident George insisted he was OK and after a hit or miss exam he was allowed to go home. The next day he couldn't walk --he was so stiff and sore..

It was urgent that we get a new car as the Buick was a complete disaster. Davey and his dad went to Maxton's in Butler. They had decided to buy a Chevrolet which we would drive for a year and let Davey have when he was discharged from the Navy.. Then we would buy another Buick. Davey picked out a car which he liked and they drove it home--then down to the hospital.. I hadn't seen George since Monday night. Luckily I do not get poison ivy--my sisters got it just from handling my clothes.

About the third day I was in the hospital, our daughter gave birth to a baby girl who they named Mary Kathryn.

Her dad and brother visited the two in the hospital in So Bend but I needed to wait until I could ride that far.

On our way home from the hospital, I felt we were going too fast as the fence posts went out of view very quickly but I said to myself "alright -get ahold of yourself. You can't go through life afraid of riding in a car!" (I was 48 yrs old)

It was great to be home while our son was home but not too comfortable for a couple of weeks. However when I was well on my way to recovery we decided it was time to get all of the navy whites laundered and and dried in the sun where they came out snow white. Davey had gotten a furlough extension through efforts of the Red Cross. He didn't like Navy boxer shorts so we replenished his supply of knit briefs. Time went too fast and it was time for his return to Orange,Texas. His air fare tickets were in the glove compartment of the Buick but my brother had emptied it the night of the wreck and put all of its contents in safe keeping.

As the plane left Baer Field, we promised to see him in February; a promise which we kept.

The remainder of 1952 went rather swiftly and when we were there in Texas in early 1953 , it was great to know his Navy life would soon end .He had enlisted before his 18th birthday so before his 21st , he was back in Indiana with an honorable discharge and ready to face civilian life. He had enough Government savings bonds to buy the Chevy as we allowed him the full matured value. Sad to say that only few weeks later he hit a patch of fresh gravel and wrecked it. Maxton's did a great job of making it like new and since he didn't want a mark on his insurance ,he footed the bill himself.

He got a job working a Partee's and later transferred to Heating and Plumbing with Bender in Leo. When Bender cut his staff, he found employment with Amstutz Heating and Plumbing. He entered Purdue extension soon after his discharge but did not like it and decided to work for a living. He wanted to be in the building and after several years in heating and plumbing, he changed to carpentry. Since his dad's health wasn't the best and he was working fewer hours, Davey went to work for his Uncle Erving Vendrely.

He worked there for several years with cousin Bud and friend Jim Dwyer. He then went to Bunt Enterprises where he continued until his death.

Well our family kept growing. Our daughter had 4 daughters-each five years apart. Our son married Nancy Furnish and they had three daughters and a son. Seems one son was the limit for a generation. George was an only son, Davey an only son and Davey, jr. an only one, and now Christopher an only one to carry on the Doll name.

I continued to work at Stillman's full time until 1967 when I took my Social Security and went on part time. I rode to work with Pete Storer for 25 yrs, and that was really reliable transportation,.

After several years in Stillman's men's department, I transferred to the Boys dept, as assistant buyer. Two years later I became buyer. I loved it and had wonderful ladies in my employ.

The store manager often offered prizes for the best display of merchandise for a particular season. With the help of the window trimmer, we won the contest several times. (much to the chagrin of Mr. Bender, buyer for girls)

With a lot of help from the store manager, the display people, advertising and the gals in the New York office the Boy's Dept. became one of the best in the city. We had most of the well known brands : Levi, Dickie, Fruit of the Loom, Kaynee, Cataline, Jockey and a full line of wallets, ewelry, belts and suspenders.

Things were going Gung-ho when on Saturday, August 18th, 1957 I fell down the stairs from the 3rd to 2nd floor while going for boxes. A rush in the ambulance. Sirens screaming , into emergency and x-rays which showed a split shoulder socket and a broken upper right arm . A cast and harness was put on and I demanded to go home. Dr. Rossiter consented. Alas , what a mistake that was! George was at the license bureau in Auburn, renewing his driver's license when a call came: "go to the Lutheran Hosp. at once" He did so and found me foaming at the mouth to go home. He disagreed with such an idea but complied. I was home and tucked into bed and George was off to Auburn again.

Less than an hour after he left my arm had swollen badly and the cast was so tight that I called Walters Ambulance, called Dr. Rossiter and rushed to the hospital. The traction was changed and I was admitted to the hospital.

I promised to stay until the doctor said I could go home.

In the meantime, George came home from Auburn and found me gone and a note which said "call Dr. Rossiter's office" He did and went again to the hospital. By that time he was ready to turn me over his knee and whispered "I told you to stay here"

A new cast was put on, but two weeks the arm was not healing. A bone specialist, Dr. Glock, was called in. He came to my room and told me "tomorrow we will put you to sleep and apply a new cast. That evening Dr. Shafer came in to tell me he would give the anesthetic the next morning. About 7:30 AM I had a shot and went to the operating room where Drs. Rossiter, Glock, Shafer and nurses were ready to go to work. I was told I would be in the recovery room about 3 or 4 hours after they were done.

I tried to complain to Dr. Rossiter about my roommate who nearly drove me crazy but before I finished one breath of Sodium Pentothal, I was in dreamland. I'm easily put out and hard to keep that way and I awakened returning to the recovery room. I kept demanding to be returned to the 4th floor room or I would walk there --fat chance, eh? I had a lot revealed to me since I had never been in a recovery room before. Nurses running there and there, patients ringing bells, screaming, yelling for pain pills. I was feeling tops and having a hard time getting the bed pan. Time moved slowly but at 2PM I was taken back to my bed on 4th floor and given a light lunch.

Dr. Glock explained the procedure they had followed. Ordinarily a broken shoulder required a body cast but since the weather was extremely hot and I was 53 yrs. old, he had changed the method and I had a pendulum cast of 40 pounds weight from my elbow to my wrist which needed to hang down and swing at all times. I'm certain that was better than a breast cast but how would you like 40 lbs. Hanging at your side even while you slept? I stayed 7 weeks in the hospital and wore that cast until late November.

In the meantime I learned to write and eat left-handed with lots of scheming could do well for myself. Cooking, dishes, keeping up with my books from the store were no problem. George ran the sweeper, we sent the laundry out and someone always helped with changing linens, etc. I did not go back to work until after the holidays. All of the Christmas merchandise had been ordered before my accident. I did the order for regular merchandise at home after checking the inventory. I went in frequently to order spring merchandise. The department had been completely remodeled and I went back for the grand opening. George had made a stool to stand on while putting slacks on the shelves. I took it easy after returning to work but was soon back in the routine. I had done exercises all the time I was off and my arm was declared 80% normal. I never could really shampoo my own hair but I felt I deserved that one luxury.

While in the hospital our daughter had a baby girl who they named Jane Frances--made me real proud. In November Davey and Nancy had a little boy to carry on the Doll name.

George had built a ranch home for the young Doll family at the north edge of Spencerville where they resided until 1964. Jim and Arden Dwyer built next door to them. Each of them had 4 children and lived peacefully side by side.

We celebrated my Dad's birthday that year while I had the cast on and I have pictures of that day. Tillie Schlatter and friend were visiting in Indiana and shared the day with us.

We made several trips between 1951 and 1958. We went to Nova Scotia, a cruise to Nassau and many trips to Florida.

We continued to live on the farm. George farmed one year and then we rented out or put it in government soil relief. George planted 500 locust and pine trees as a re-forestation project..

I had been active in politics for several years and served 20 years or more on the election board. George became interested and involved, registering before election and serving as sheriff election day.

Both George and I were active in the Lutheran church in Spencerville. I taught Sunday school at age 14 and continued to do so for many, many, years. We were both Sunday school superintendents. The first vacation pay George got we used to start a Vacation Bible School. We had help from several volunteers and Rev. and Ruth Stevenson. Rev. Stevenson served as a fill in pastor while he was still at Seminary. George worked for free all summer to get the parsonage ready for Rev and his bride. Before being married, each Friday night found Frank at the Doll's ranch to eat supper. Often he and George played a round of golf--he with clubs and George with a baseball bat. He was part of our family. He confirmed our two kids, married them and baptized the first grandchild (Ann Maxwell)

I was on the church council and served as treasurer for 16 years, beginning when the church inherited a lot of money from the Kramer estate. Later we sold the Kramer farm and the money was invested in Mission Bonds. The interest was used in part to help seminarians through school.

About 1958, I decided I should go fishing! Previous to that time, if we went to the lake, I would pray for rain so we could get off the lake. I felt guilty. George did things with me which weren't his favorites so why couldn't I go fishing? The time came early in the spring, on a warm day I decided to go to Fish Lake with him. Clumsy me--I went to push the boat out and fell in the lake up to my neck in black mud. George helped me into the boat, got a blanket from the car and across the lake we went to a rather secluded place. We went ashore, hung my clothes on tree branches and I started to fish. The bluegills were on the beds and bit like mad. In spite of the mishap, I had a great time. The next day I bought a cane pole. Now I had my own pole and each Thursday I could hardly get up early enough to go fishing. Sometimes we would go after church on Sunday. If the fish decided not to bite, I would lie down in the boat and sleep. Seldom did we go home with just a few fish. I remember one day about 10 guys were fishing at Fish Lake. My first throw in the water I got a bite. I pulled it in and it was the largest bluegill I had ever seen! Everyone was excited but the fish weren't biting and all the boats kept moving. About 2PM we pulled up beside Paul Vogts who yelled "Well Frances, do you have your limit and Georges' too?" I replied: "Paul, if I had 1 more I would have 2 fish"

Most of the time we had our limit of 25 each and more which we shared with someone on the lake.

I had joined the Ft. Wayne Business Women's Club at the invitation of my friend Lavon Misegades. They took a theater tour to New York City each year. George didn't like cities so that week was mine. He went deer hunting each November in Wyoming so this week in NYC was my hunting trip. The first year we went by train and the second year by bus. We stopped in the Pocono mountains the first night. Our theater tickets were all prescheduled and were the greatest. I saw my first large screen movie "Around the World in 80 Days and it was astounding. We saw several stage shows including "Camelot" with Richard Burton and Robert Goulet. Although I have seen it several times since, none could compare to that.

It was in an old theater with red velvet seats. We saw Martha Raye as an oil driller, Ethel Merman in the fox hunt and at least 8 more. We went to the Waldorf Theater to see Sheila and Gordon McCrae. Cabs were hard to get and one of our 5 people was left behind. I waited at the door for her. Lucky us!!!! The usher took us right up on the stage next to the McCrae's dressing room where we were served canapes, drinks and what have you.

Our trips included a dinner at the Copacabana, Golden Ring and the Latin Quarter. We visited the United Nations one forenoon and while eating lunch, young Will Rogers came through. He gave us tickets to his early show in Grand Central Station the next morning. So we were on national television. I called home and told George to spread the word that we would be on CBS the next morning.

We also went to a TV show with Gary Moore and Carol Burnett at the Hotel Plaza in Central Park. We ate at Jack Dempsey's restaurant which was being picketed, the Polynesian Room at one of the big hotels. The week always went by too swiftly. We were there at Easter and saw the Rockettes. What a show that was! Rockefeller Center was filled with tulips and flowers everywhere you looked. One year we were there for the St. Patrick's Day parade and who isn't Irish on that day? I missed George not being there but I missed him too when he went hunting with the Sechlers and Masons.

We took lots of trips. At last I got 5 weeks vacation and we met and made lots of friends in Florida each year. Not too many of them are left (in 1990) but I still keep in touch with a few--Rose Walsh in Chicago

Annually in Nov. George went hunting in Wyoming. In 1960 and 1966, I went to the National Women's Democratic Conference in Wash.DC My first trip was with a great bunch of ladies from Allen County. We had a super time. John Kennedy was running for president. Mornings were spent in round table discussions and you were supposed to be with people you hadn't met before.. A nice appearing colored lady invited us to join her table. She introduced herself and believe it or not she was Mayor Daley 's attorney. (Chicago) She was in her early 50's, extremely intelligent, attractive and very friendly . She was a very fluent speaker and had no problem holding one's attention. We spoke on many subjects, not all political.

I was especially interested in her discussion on mixed marriages. She spoke personally as her brother had married a white lady to which one daughter was born. They did not seem to fit into her family or his and divorce resulted. The father had custody of the daughter and this aunt had raised her with the aid of the father. By that time she was grown and ready for college. She wanted to go to Northwestern U at Champaign, Ill. Up to that point, no colored students had ever been admitted but this girl of mixed parents was the first... She was going to a university in Boston to further her education.

We had the best of everything in Washington DC. We stayed in the Park Sheraton where all of the special events were held. It was a large , beautiful hotel and was receiving a facelift at the time--which was a bit inconvenient . We had a 16 room suite through the influence of district chairman, Jim Koontz. Our stay was very inexpensive. Senators Hartke and Bayh gave us a reception and a special breakfast for the Indiana group.

The highlight of the week was a luncheon in honor of Eleanor Roosevelt. All of the presidential candidates' wives were special guests. Eleanor Roosevelt was the most impressive (but homely as a mud fence) that I have ever met. She just amazed you with each word she spoke. She was simply dressed and spoke with knowledge and authority. She was a very stately lady and standing beside her was Jackie Kennedy, a miniature beside a giant.

Both were great ladies and have left their marks in the sands of time. After dinner, people seated on the floor level were offered balcony seats and from there the voices were heard much more clearly and the view was better. The Fort Wayne delegation was fortunate enough to sit behind the Kennedy family including mother Rose and daughters Pat, Jean and Eunice.

Each senator's wife was introduced. Jackie Kennedy, very pregnant at the time, was dressed in a plain cotton dress but looked very demure, stylish and sweet. She had dark eyes and a broad smile and brought down the house with applause. She spoke softly, distinctively with praise for dear Jack and why he should be our next president.

Her small delicate hands gripped yours and she spoke sweetly to each one in the guest line. I received a PT boat pin from Jack Kennedy which I value highly.

During the week in Washington, we visited Arlington Cemetery, Mt. Vernon, ate at the Wharf, toured the city at night, visited the senate building and many other points of interest. It was a great week in my life, always to be cherished, and the friendships of those in our party lingered on.

In 1966, my sister Dorothy and sister-in-law Opal again attended the Democratic Conference in Washington DC. I had served two years as president of DeKalb Co. Womens Club and was that year vice-president. Twelve ladies from DeKalb and Stueben counties boarded the B and O railroad in Garrett for a week in DC. This time we stayed in the Shoreham and the meetings were in the Hilton with shuttle service from the other hotels.. One night the shuttle driver asked if we would like to see the city at night. He was a good driver and gave us a great tour.

We had a noon luncheon and a banquet in the evening at which Vice-president Hubert Humphrey spoke. He was a good speaker but didn't know when to quit. The food was good-- Cornish hen stuffed with rice. The last day of the week, we were given an escorted tour of the White House. We were told to wear hats, white gloves and to check our purses at the south entrance. No cameras were allowed. The size of the White House was overwhelming and its beauty even more so.

The tour amazed me the way visitors treated the place: Diapers left on the stairs, gum wrappers dropped here and there, just not treated with respect. After the tour we were invited to the huge room where Muriel Humphrey, Lady Bird Johnson and daughters, Lynda and Lucy greeted each of us. They were very gracious ladies. Just before we left, Pres. Johnson arrived home and welcomed us. I even got a kiss on the cheek from him. We were each given a picture of the Johnson family and were asked to return. We made reservations to do so in 1968 but cancelled due to racial problems in the Capital. During this trip we again went to Arlington where a military funeral was in progress. We visited JF Kennedy's grave, Mt. Vernon, senate building, Jefferson museum and Sen Robert Kennedy's office for a brief visit.. I met his wife ,Ethel , in Washington and later at a rally in Ft. Wayne when he was running for president.

Those two trips to DC made my life very adventurous and thankful for the privilege of living in the USA . where women are and always will be an important part of life.

I continued on from Garrett after leaving the rest of the party and headed for Chicago to attend a buyers' meeting at the Merchandise Mart where Jean Malcolm and Dorothy . Biederman were ready to open their buying for fall merchandise. Those days were filled with hard work, there were so many prices and styles . Since some of the salesmen visited us regularly back in Ft. Wayne , we were able to skip them.

The first evening in Chicago, the New York office and some suppliers gave a party for us in the huge ballroom. Food and entertainment were great and the NY girls accompanied me in a cab back to my hotel. Thursday couldn't come quick enough. A great eleven days but home and George looked very good.

I continued to work daily for a long time in the Stillman's boy's department. I love people, I love kids, and enjoyed my work. Although the pay was minimal, the insurance was good , vacations were great, and special discounts made it possible to buy more for family and friends. Since I had only one grandson, he was kept in knit shirts by Kaynee. My two granddaughters Ronda and Sonda also received gorgeous pink winter jackets from a company in the Merchandise Mart.

During all those years (1940-1980) we kept busy in church activities. George spent an entire summer remodeling the Lutheran sanctuary with much help from Roger Stebing and other parishoners. A very dear couple --the Wearley's--had a son who had a profitable automobile franchise in Toledo. Because his parents had contributed so much wisdom, encouragement and finances to the church, he decided to give a sum of money to the church. At first he gave \$1500(which was a lot at that time)and promised more if the members matched his gift. A few of us began the task of complying with his wishes. It wasn't too difficult, and after we reached the match, he sent a check for \$5000.

The church council made plans for completely renovating the front of the church. My husband found a cabinet maker in Hicksville who specialized in altars and pulpits. After some changes, we were ready for the new furniture. What a beautiful altar and pulpit. One had to see it to appreciate it. Pastor Stevenson worked along with the laborers and perhaps was the most enthused of all.

Now we had a had a pretty sanctuary--except for the seats--but we had an old,old coal furnace in the basement. A special meeting was called to talk about an oil furnace.A few of us had previously tested the water for possible contributions so that if the furnace was OK'd we would have something to offer. In the winter, George and Frank Rhodes took turns spending Saturday night at the church, stoking the furnace so we would be comfortable on Sunday morning. The meeting was opened for questions and suggestions. A few objections were made to a new furnace, but with little support. I moved that we buy the new oil furnace and it was passed unanimously. Then Roscoe Walters where the money would come from...

There was a call from the president (Roger Stebing) for donations and five families said they would each give \$150. You should have seen the look on some of the other faces! Roscoe Walter joined the group of donors too. By the time the meeting was closed, we needed only \$750 more. Within the week we had that amount promised. Also Maurice Hollobaugh a local Shell distributor promised that with the help of his boss ,Mark Tyndall, to supply oil for the first year.

Many years earlier, the Lutheran congregation had voted to put a complete basement under the building as only a small part was dug when the building erected. Gaylon Markle and I had been asked by the church council to canvas Spencerville for help. We were teenagers, enrolled in a young ladies' class taught by George Beams. We did our duty and the results were astonishing. I remember one incident so well: Gaylon and I were walking toward the church and Mr. Bert Fisher was sitting in front of his butcher shop. He had sort of a gruff voice and asked us what we were up to on this pretty day. We responded that we were collecting money to complete the huge job of enlarging the basement of the Lutheran church. He said:(Hell, I'm Lutheran, I'll give you \$10.) We were astounded ! Neither of us knew he had ever attended the Lutheran church--his family all went to the Methodist church.

Spencerville people responded very well and we were proud to have contributed to the project. This is when the coal furnace was put in.

After the coal furnace was replaced with the oil, George volunteered to put in a new kitchen. He did this charging only for some of the lumber--no labor. Our family enjoyed all of these improvements to the church building.

I had planned to stop working at Stillman's in May ,1974. My boss however told me not to quit because bankruptcy proceedings are underway and the store will probably close. He said if I were still employed I would receive some perks for working there for 25 years.

The year previous had not been a happy one for the Doll family. While George and I were in Florida, we got a phone call on Palm Sunday telling us Davey was entering Dekalb Memorial Hospital for a hernia operation--but there was no need for us to rush home. We had planned to come home the next weekend any way.

In surgery a small cyst was removed from the affected bowel..Specimens were sent to Ft.Wayne and Indianapolis labs and the biopsies were positive for cancer.. He was readmitted to the hospital where his spleen was removed to keep the cancer from spreading. Cobalt treatments were ordered and Davey was sent to Dr. Gastenau in FtWayne. The cobalt worked and with few side effects. In July he went back to work for Ben Bunt. He worked until Feb.1974. Then several lumps reappeared. He now was very serious and Dr.

Hines told him to get his house in order--His time was limited. He took chemotherapy treatments regularly and it was not for him. He was really miserable and required frequent hospitalization and many pints of blood. Dr. Gastenau had the reputation of being one of the best but his bedside manner was horrible and he didn't have an inkling of human kindness. Later Davey transferred to another doctor at StJoseph Medical Center. He made daily trips to Parkview for treatment.

His wife Nancy was back at work and with a new union contract , she could put Davey on her insurance and that was a break. Mr Bunt didn't carry insurance on his men but paid them 55% of their wages while they could not work. Very often Davey and Sonda spent part of the day on our porch and had lunch with George and me. The two older ones worked at the school and Ronda was in Michigan with our daughter.

Now it was June 1974, and our 50th wedding anniversary was June 21st. Any kind of a celebration was not in my plans but Davey was determined to have a party for us. My daughter asked my sister-in-law Opal if she would take over. She quickly agreed and did everything--even made my dress. Tonda was going to Mexico before the 21st so the party was set for the preceding Sunday. Davey was unable to go to church that morning but filled with medicine, he was able to go to the family dinner at Richard's. He put on a good face, ate a good meal and then went to our house to lie down until we went to the community hall. He smiled and visited all afternoon but to his sister and me , it was a very , very sad affair.

More than 150 people attended and because of his condition, Davey and I sat by the door most of the afternoon. The entire family had a dinner at the hall and tired beyond tired , Davey helped load up the gifts and then went home with his family.

Tonda left for Mexico on Thursday and Davey entered DeKalb Hosp. the next day where he lived until August 18, 1974. God decided His loan to us of a dear son was past due and took him in His arms and called him home. I tried to accept it and talked to Davey many times the last week he lived.

He said ,”Mom, if I could only have lived long enough to see one of my kids graduate from high school and to see all of them confirmed.” Pastor Mumma had told me once that if you go out into a rose garden to pluck a flower, you choose a bud as it is prettier and will last longer. I told him that God had chosen him.

We waited seven years for Davey’s birth and now I realized the gift of life called children are only loaned to us and you never get a loan without paying interest. The sorrows and problems along life’s way are the interest. It was great having him for 42 years and our memories will always be fresh in our minds and they are many!!

Now backtracking to the year 1971.. I graduated from Leo High school in 1921 and a couple of us decided we needed to celebrate our 50th anniversary. I offered to be the hostess with lots of help from my husband. Ten pupils made up the 1921 class. By 1971, one had passed on and one was seriously ill. Those absent were Mary Klopfenstein Clauser (deceased) and Clara belle Klopfenstein Kruse (ill). Those in attendance: Gerald Klopfenstein, Cecil Trimble and wife, Henry Lantz and wife, Velma Akey Kryder and husband, Orpha VanZile Akey and husband, Audrey Hollopeter Miller and Husband, Ruth Gerig Wiederkehr and husband, and George and I. We had a great day, great potluck dinner, lots of laughing and much reminiscing. We had been considered the loudest and happiest class to graduate from LHS and we hadn’t changed much over the years. We had two more reunions after that and drifted apart then. Gerald died later that year but it was so good to see him in June as we had been friends since 1907.

Hopefully time will heal the loss of Davey. George and will try to live for those he left behind: his dear wife and four children . Nancy kept on working and did the very best possible. George and I continued to fish but not very often.

In October, George and I went to Stevensville to Ruthanna’s. He seemed to have a cold and he retired early. About an hour later Lisa came screaming that Grandpa was lying on the bedroom floor. We rushed to get him up , took him to the bathroom where he began vomiting. We called the EMS. They came immediately, took his vitals, asked a lot of questions and then took him to the hospital in St. Joseph He was admitted and assigned a doctor from India.

After he was settled in, we went home to clean up the bathroom and call home to tell them about George and that I didn't know when we would be home. I crawled into bed but sleep didn't come easily. Bright and early Monday morning we went to the hospital. George seemed better but they wanted to keep him 24 hrs. longer. Tuesday when we went, the doctor told us what had happened. A small capillary in the lower skull had broken and caused a small stroke. He was very calm and no pain and the doctor said he could go home... Ruthanna and I had lunch, got our car, and returned to get George. We started back to Spencerville feeling sure that Dr. Wills would put him in the hospital. But oh, No, ! he gave him a lot of medicine and sent him home. Ruthanna stayed over night and then Woodrow took her to the bus station and she returned home. I wished over and over we had changed doctors then but George thought Dr. Wills was OK.

By February his health seemed great. We decided to go to Florida for 5 weeks. The Buick had only 1250 miles on it when it practically burned up near New Albany. We pulled off the ramp where luckily there was a station. They pulled the car in and checked it. A belt broke and it controlled the air and all essentials. The pulley on which it rested was checked and found inferior. In fact it was marked at the factory and should never have been put on a car. The repair manager could find none in New Albany and said the car was too new to find one on a weekend and they would get one the next morning in Louisville. I saw a car exactly like ours setting on the sale lot and asked the repairman if they could take one off it and then we could be on our way. The manager said OK but that we may have to pay for the extra work involved.

They made us a reservation at the Holiday Inn and a nice little colored man took us to the motel. They promised to work on it that night and would call us in the morning, which they did. When the guy picked us up he said it was driveable but he wouldn't want to drive it. We went back to the garage and talked to the manager. He assured us it was OK to drive but we must put it in the Buick garage as soon as we reached Sarasota. He called that garage and assured us this would not affect our guarantee. There was no charge for their work. The motor was very noisy, didn't idle well and we put gas in without shutting off the motor.

We arrived in Sarasota on time and our good friends Joe and Rose were waiting for us with open arms. George and Joe took his car and our "bundle of bolts" as George called it, to the Buick garage. They did a complete engine job.: new valves, new pistons and the works. We had no car for 12 days. Joe was our transportation, so once we got our car back, Joe had orders to put his keys away and drive ours.

We had 5 wonderful weeks in Florida. Lots of ball games, shuffleboard and fun. It was a real honeymoon after 50 years together and those memories are so important to me.

We spent that year together and loved every minute, but I could see George slipping rapidly. Although he could still climb most any tree at age 74 and ride his bike several miles each day, I began to run scared. By Labor Day he was quite unstable and his walk slower and slower. I called Ruthanna and she came that evening. He went upstairs to bed OK but by morning we practically had to carry him downstairs. We called Dr Wills and he just said:"Take him to a nursing home, he's just old". We couldn't get any satisfaction from him so I called Mrs. Spade, a great nurse at the hospital. I called her at home and she said Dr. Hines was out of town but she was certain Dr. Harvey would admit him. My brother, Woodrow, came and as his car had a lay-down seat, George rode with him to the hospital. My angel-of-mercy, LuAnn Bassett, was on duty in the emergency room. She called Dr. Wills who didn't answer. Dr Harvey was out of town so she called the doctor who was on call. It happened to be Dr.C.B. Hathaway who was in church but came immediately. He admitted George to the 3rd floor. He was resting fine, his vitals were not too bad so by four PM we went home and Ruthanna went back to Michigan.

When I arrived at the hospital at 8AM on Monday, he didn't know me. DrCB said his temperature and blood pressure went rampant in the night and he had a stroke. George rallied and improved and went home in 2 weeks. He seemed fine but in just a few days another stroke hit him while at the breakfast table. I tied him to his chair until I got help, called the doctor and EMS and he went back to the hospital where he stayed 9 weeks. In the meantime Dr. Hathaway agreed to keep George as a patient. He would take me on also as my doctor whom I had depended on for 50 years had died of a heart attack. I was really a healthy person and needed a doctor only once in a while. It was time for George to be released.

DeKalb Memorial had one of the best therapists I have ever known and he really did wonders for George. Our daughter stayed nights with her dad and I stayed days. A young man studying to be a priest volunteered at the hospital. He and Ruthanna walked her dad every evening and I made him use his hands playing game, etc. He recuperated well but the doctor said he needed 24 hour care and he wanted him to go to a nursing home. I asked the doctor if he would tell him and he said, "sure." Strokes change one's personality and George was no exception.

However he only lashed out at me once. The head nurse told me just to go home as they always hurt the ones they love. Later he had the nurse call me so he could apologize.

Ruthanna and I shopped for a nursing home. Betz Home was newly built north of Auburn. They had vacancies but asked that we bring only white hospital clothes. Meadowhaven at Butler said we could bring his own clothes so he could be dressed daily. One of the nurses, Anita Bremer, was from our church and we knew the head nurse and others who worked there. George was happy at Meadowhaven and they were extremely nice to him. Each week Ruthanna came on her day off and brought her dad home for the day. He was always ready to go back and never wanted to be late. We took him fishing but he was more afraid of me falling in than interested in fishing. We caught a nice string of fish and had them for supper. The fish that were left over he took to one of the nurses at the home.

By July he was able to come home to stay. After just a few days he fell and broke his hip and that meant another hospital stay. Gerig funeral home brought us a hospital bed and we put it by the dining room window. He progressed rapidly and I was able to get him up into the wheelchair by myself. The cast came off after Thanksgiving. He could go up and down steps so I took him out in the wheelchair every day the weather permitted and when not, I put him on the front porch, bundled up for the weather. He tried very hard to help himself. He crawled on his hands and knees often and that was great exercise. By spring he could climb the stairs to sleep in our old room again. Sometimes he wasn't very pleasant but it never lasted.

Good luck seemed to avoid him , however it never discouraged him. Our son-in-law and granddaughter picked him up for Christmas . Jim worked for Avion and brought a motor home to take him to Stevensville. Another year our daughter came to take us to Stevensville for Thanksgiving. It was a gorgeous day, warm and sunny. We wondered why we saw road trucks on the toll road loading sand and salt. When we got to Niles,Mi, we found it was snowing so hard we could hardly see to drive. The farther we went, the worse it got. About 15 miles from Stevensville , we had a high hill to climb. Ruthanna waited until nothing was in sight , gave it the gas, shifted gears and up the hill we went. Now I stopped worrying because we were close enough we knew we could call Jim if we had to.

We arrived OK. Ann and her family came, and so did Jane and Mary. We became snow bound. for several days. On Monday with snow tires, Ruthanna took us home.

We got through the winter OK , but the next fall , George fell in the kitchen. He never washed a dish while he was well but always offered to help after he was incapacitated; It was a Monday night and I was going to have church council at the house. He started to go in to lie down and fell. I got him to bed, cancelled council, and called our nurse friend, Anita Bremer. We called Dr Hathaway. I told the doctor he was not having any pain. When Anita came to check on him the next day, he was at the table stemming grapes for grape juice. He did fine but when his bowels stopped we took him to the hospital. He kept saying "I think I broke my back" X-rays were taken and confirmed a broken back. It was a clean break and just required bed rest.

This was Nov.1978. In January 1978 , our daughter and family moved to California. Jim had been employed by Avion and when it was sold to Fleetwood, he was forced to move to their headquarters. Lisa hated to change schools and Ruthanna didn't want to leave her dad and me. But push came to shove and Jim left the day after Christmas, pulling one car and taking the bare essentials . Ruthanna took our Buick home and she and Lisa planned to move at the end of school semester. Their house was sold and Ruthanna flew to California in search of a home. Lisa, who hate to move , sort of relented if the house in Ca had a pool. They found one and came back to prepare for the move. They were all loaded when a severe snow storm hit .

When it was safe to travel, they returned our car and Woodrow took them to the airport to start west. Our first great grandson had been born in Dec 1977--Christopher Link.

They were all settled and in Nov 1978 Ruthanna planned to come back for Davey and Jills wedding. But since George was in the hospital, she decided to stay with him and miss the wedding. George recovered from the back problem but he was a bit more fearful of walking.

Summer arrived and we spent as much time as possible on the screened front porch. It was 1979 and we celebrated our August birthdays with Ronda.

Nancy had remarried to Charlie Fogle of Harlan. He also had 4 children, two already married.

We were still ardent White Sox fans and watched them whenever they were on TV..George had improved enough to attend church. He was a lot of care but love conquers hardships. I shaved him, bathed him and helped him dress daily. His personality change showed up once in a while but was short lived and he was sorry afterward.

I was on the church council so would have the meetings at our house. He loved that. He would lie down after supper and as the council members arrived, they would go into the den to greet him. When the meeting was over I'd serve refreshments and he would come out to the dining room and join in.

Life went on. Our traveling days were over but had many pleasant memories: 25 trips to Florida, Texas, Nova Scotia, Nassau, and Cuba, Canada and every state in union except Rhode Island and Delaware.

Ill health seemed to haunt poor George. After the first stroke, he was on a lot of medication and in the fall of 1979 he developed a duodenal ulcer that meant a trip back to the hospital. He needed blood transfusions and something to stop the bleeding. He was started on Tagamet which was in the guinea pig stage then. They were the answer and he continued to take them as long as he lived. He seemed to be doing fine when the eve before Thanksgiving he became serious. Ruthanna got an emergency flight and came home.

Her arrival did much for him. He recuperated and was in the hospital for 2 weeks, going home before she left. He was on a strict diet and I never allowed him to cheat.

George remarked that I was so helpless I couldn't even take a mouse out of a trap but that I could do a million things he couldn't do. I kept traps in the basement tho' we seldom found mice. So I did find a mouse in the trap two days after he entered the hospital. I threw mouse and trap in to the river. I learned to do a lot of things after George's first stroke. I learned to cut the hedge, trim the bushes and cut a wild vine off the side of the barn, taking the electric line with it. A good friend of ours, Mr. Jones, repaired it and I planned not to tell George, but he saw the whole deal.

Other problems arose: we needed a new water heater, a new roof and a coat of paint on the house. Davey repaired the fence and painted the house for extra income just before his marriage. He rented the house across the street from us and that was great. Now it was 1980 and George came down with pneumonia. He was rushed to the hospital. With Davey and Jill and Christina near by, I always had a driver to get me around.

Before dismissing George, Dr Hathaway , encouraged me to place him in a nursing home before I wore out. I said I would think about it. Hindsight is always better than the present. About 2 weeks after dismissal, George called me at 4AM to go to the bathroom. I helped him there and back to bed. I fell asleep and he tried to go to the bathroom on his own. He crawled under his bed and I struggled to get him out from under there. He seemed disoriented--probably a light stroke. I got him up, bathed and shaved him and we had breakfast.

Then I talked to him about going into the nursing home. He said he would never crawl under the bed again. I told him he might and showed him the carpet burns where he had tried to free himself. He agreed and I called Dr. Hathaway. Betz Nursing had an opening and Woodrow went with me to make arrangements while Opal stayed with George. He went to the home in the ambulance and we stayed until he was settled in. Mrs. Leedy asked us not to visit for a couple of days.

Back home the house was empty and my tasks few. My family was so great and Jill and Christina came over often. Many times the past year, George had said, "Why don't you sell this house? It's too much for you and it doesn't mean much to me anymore." Now that he was in the nursing home, he began prodding to sell the house. Finally I got three appraisals on it and prepared to dispose of it. Of course I would have to have an auction--George had saved everything. I accused him of keeping sawdust. Preparing for a sale was a very, very big job!!

My family offered to help but it's a job you need to do yourself. I threw away, kept too much and tried disposal again. I got up early --either called or went to the nursing home, and then down to the basement for a long day of disposal and preparation. Maybe I'd spend the day in the barn or upstairs in the large closet.

My house was up for sale and I had a very good prospect who wanted it very badly but needed to sell his house. Same old story! was finally ready for a public sale. I called the auctioneer who made a list ready for a sale bill.

In the meantime that weekend was Spencerville Days and my family planned to have a potluck at my house and all my brothers, sisters and families came. While eating, we felt a rumble and shake but thought nothing of it until Jeff Hursh came and told us we had had an earthquake. We had a great day. My sister, Kathryn, was moving to Florida and her daughter and husband were helping them move.. They all decided to stay for supper as it looked as if we were moving farther from each other and we might as well enjoy ourselves. It was a beautiful July day and we had a great reunion.

. Davey and Jill and I had looked for an apartment in Auburn but I was not happy with what I looked at. Pastor Schuette told me to call Hoham's because a lady from his church who had lived there had just passed away. Mr. Hoham said he did have a vacancy but there are 4 people on the waiting list.. Three days later, we looked at the apartment. . It was # 106, on the first floor, and had a porch across the entire front side. He told me the rent would be \$240 but there were still three ahead of me. On Monday he called to tell me the apartment was mine. I paid him one month's rent and got the keys.

I went to the light office, signed the contract and did not have to pay a deposit since we had had service since 1942 and was never late in payment. That was good news.

Home we went to get ready to move. Having plenty of time, Jill and I made several trips with small articles and by Aug. 1st I was ready to move. The entire family helped. Pete Timmerman loaned us his truck, Erving had a van, Woodrow a boat trailer and Stan a closed truck. Believe it or not we took everything in one trip. The china closed was a problem but they tied it to the boat trailer on a mattress...By noon everything was in place and we returned to Helen's house to eat. Dorothy and Opal went back to the apartment to do some more work, and the men went home.

Earlier that day Jill had picked up a letter at the post office for Davey from the state government. I wanted her to open it but she was afraid to do so. Davey had been turned down twice for the State Police Academy and she feared another refusal. I promised her I would be responsible for the opening of it. This was a large manila envelope and did not look like the refusal letters. Finally she opened it and it was a notice to report in 10 days to the academy in Pendleton..Jill was so excited that she ran up and down the stairs like mad and did the same in Auburn to unload. I told her to take my car and go tell Davey where he was working. We finished straightening the apartment and returned to Spencerville--after stopping to tell George I was moved in and about Davey's being accepted at the academy.

Jill and Davey packed, stored some at Nancy's, some at her mom's. Davey had a lot of shopping to do for clothes, etc. Jill and Christina planned to stay part of the time with Nancy while Davey was in school.

I worked like a dog getting ready for a public sale the Saturday after Labor Day and the community club. Ruthanna came a week before the sale. We moved clothes, shoes etc to the Goodwill and the Curiosity shop. George had a lot of clothes that had never been worn. An Amish lady bought a lot of the things, including nicknacks she was giving to her daughter who was to be married. Sale day came and it rained and there were two other sales that day in the area. Woodrow took charge of George's tools and the boat. and others watched the linens and dishes, etc. The crowd was fair in size and most everything was sold. The community club served lunch as a money making project for them.

By 5 PM the hall was cleaned up and I told the man who bought the twin beds he could pick up the mattress and springs if he wanted them.. He was happy to do that. When everything was finished and settled up, I took the entire gang to the Steakhouse in Auburn for supper.

Ruthanna and I then went to see George at the nursing home. George always seemed better when she was around and this was no exception. We stayed till 9PM , telling George we would take him to see the apartment on Sunday. We started home and we forgot we were sleeping in Auburn that night and had to turn around and go back.

We went to church Sunday and Pastor Schuette talked to us about joining St. Mark's. When we talked to George his first reaction was no way but he agreed since I would be attending there. Pastor Schuette came over with the Cadillac wheel chair (given to the church by the Hathaway's) and we went to the church where he received us into the congregation and gave us communion. He took George all over the building up and down. George thought the apartment was nice and thought I would be happy in it. He would have liked to stay but we told him not until the doctor said it was OK. He never mentioned it again. Pastor Schuette feared George's days were numbered and we were well aware of that fact. Ruthanna returned to California a few days later.

In November, I decided to go to California for 10 days. Dr Hathaway and Pastor Schuette promised to check on George and the nurses assured me they would take good care of him. Mr Jones sold his house and settled up with me. I booked a trip to Ontario, Ca. I went through Denver and on to Riverside. I truly enjoyed the trip but my mind was back at Betz Nursing Home most of the time. George was fine when I returned but someone had used up his cigars and candy which we left in his bedside drawer. But one of the great nurses replaced the two until I got home.

After moving to Auburn , I started back to the Heimach Center where I had gone at least once a week while George was at Meadowhaven. It was DeKalb County fair time and seniors from the Center were selling tickets for Jack's Amusements on the midway. So I volunteered to man a booth in front of the old Newberry store on Main St. It was a busy PM as the schools had been dismissed for the day.

I worked 6 or 7 hours selling tickets and watching gold fish, stuffed toys, etc. while kids rode the rides. After the fair, Sandy Mafera decided to use the \$750 they received from Jack as a partial payment for a trip East. Entire cost to the workers was \$69 and to fill the bus outsiders were given the opportunity to go for \$138. I talked to George and he said I should go. I offered to pay extra for a single room as I knew no one very well. Sandy insisted I room with her if I didn't object to her smoking. She was a great partner, however I had to help her a lot with odds and ends of unexpected or added events on the trip.

Pennsylvania was at its very best color-wise. We left Auburn at midnight and crossed Ohio at night. By daybreak, after a rest stop or two, we were in new territory and able to enjoy the scenery.

We visited Gettysburg and all surrounding places of interest. Since I hadn't slept on the way as many did, I fell asleep in the museum while watching the battle of Gettysburg. I woke up just as the battle was over. Believe it or not the couple on my right were from Auburn, Alabama.

One evening I called Steve Blum in Lebanon. He and his wife, Mary, were very good friends that we met in Sarasota. Steve always drove Mary, Rose Walsh and I around to see Florida sights and to eat out while Joe and George were golfing or playing checkers. Mary had died a few years before but Steve picked me up at the motel and took me to Lebanon to see their home and meet their daughter.

That was great too!! He was a retired tailor and always kept our apparel in apple pie order. It was a really great vacation which I needed. We visited Hershey's factory and what a sweet trip that was. We even rode in small boats to view the entire grounds. Each of us were loaded with sweets to take home. We also visited a sausage factory and a candle factory and salesroom and many loaded up there.

Back in Auburn, I made a visit to Heimach Center a daily habit and it was great for me. I made some dear friends. I took the role of a newsboy in a Thanksgiving play: "Too Much Turkey" In that play, Leo and Theo Dennis were my parents. A very close friendship came out of that. In January Leo had a stroke and passed on.

My friendship with Theo and her sister-in-law Hildred became real close. Helen Bartels and Jerry Vandercar joined our ranks. Helen and Theo are left as I write(8/25/95) but Theo has moved to northern Michigan and Helen is in very poor health.

When I first came to Auburn, I met Iris Powell, Thelma Grash and Harriet Yourian. We played Canasta every Sunday PM. Later I played with Theo, Hildred, and Helen regularly.

After about a year, I was elected Nutrition Chr. for the site and was required to go to the monthly meeting of NE Indiana Council on aging in Ft. Wayne. Rev. Bangs from the First Christian Church always took Marie Klink, Adeline Stuckey., and myself to the meetings.

At the first meeting I was asked to act as secretary. At the next meeting I was elected unanimously and served as Secretary for 4 years. What I didn't know was that I took notes in the morning and then read them at the joint meeting in the afternoon. The gentleman who presided always said "Frances does such a great job that I feel like I attended the morning meeting" I was embarrassed but thanked him.

I often volunteered in the kitchen or answered the phone or played cards at the Center. Time went swiftly and I went often to Betz's. Jill and Christina often took me or I rode the Van or rode with friends. One morning in early March, I received a call that George was ill. Dr Hathaway said he had pneumonia and would receive better care in the nursing home than in the hospital.

The family visited him daily as did Pastor Schuette. He seemed to improve but after a week or more I could see him slipping --although his mind was sharp. On March 17, Nancy and Jill were there with me and I knew George was slipping fast. I decided to stay all night. Nancy stayed all night also even tho' she had to work the next day... They gave her a bed but I wanted to stay in the room most of the time. He was awake most of the night and about 6AM, after Nancy left, I put my arm under his head and talked to him for about 1/2 hour. Ruthanna had a reservation to come the next day. I told her time was running out. She asked me if her Dad knew what was happening and is he concerned about me.

That morning we talked seriously and we shared a very intimate half hour. I spoke plainly, telling him I would gladly change places with him but that was not the Lord's will. He thanked me over and over, kissed me, hugged me and said "I wouldn't be here if you hadn't taken such good care of me" I told him he would have done that for me and he replied, "Yes, but it wouldn't have been as good as you gave me" I said, "Well, George, you will be with Davey and I wish it were me." He fell asleep in my arms until about 7:30. I fed him some applesauce and cream of wheat and then he insisted on going to the bathroom so the nurse took him. I gave him his bath, the nurse changed his bed and put him down to rest. Pastor Schuette had been there twice the night before, called at 6:00 AM and came out about 8:00. I had an appointment to get our taxes figured so he said he would tell the lady I couldn't come and make a later date.

Helen came to the home and as George was sleeping and there was no noticeable change, I went with her to the grocery. We met Pastor Schuette while there. I told him about my talk with George and he said George had told him about it and he seemed much quieter and happy. Dr. Hathaway had told him that he doubted if he would make it through another night. I told Helen she could go home as Don Smith's were coming. She made George a little antsy anyway. She said she would call Opal and tell her she didn't need to come. She did so but Opal came anyway and Smiths didn't. We continued to talk and Opal recalled some stupid thing she had just done. George said, "Let me tell you about Frances. We are in Dalton, Georgia on our way to Florida and as we are leaving town, she saw a sign on a window that was divided in the middle and said "CAR/ PETS" A little later she said 'what are car pets'? I asked her if she knew where we were. She realized Dalton is the carpet center of the world."

We all three had a good laugh over this. Not five minutes later a terrible look came across George's face. I rolled the bed down and Opal called the nurse, but he was gone. I asked the nurse to call Pastor Schuette. He was in the building and was soon in the room.

He had told me he was going to Baltimore but would return if anything happened to George. I had told him that of course we would want him but Rev. Stevenson could fill in for him. But he hadn't left would not do so until the following Monday. This was March 18, 1981 and George had gone to be with Jesus.

Opal and I stopped at the Auburn House since she was diabetic and needed to eat. I swallowed a little and then we went to the apartment to wait for the undertaker. Opal did a lot of calling for me and I called Jim at work since I couldn't get Ruthanna. Nancy, Jill, and Dorothy V. came up and insisted someone stay all night with me, but I preferred to be alone.

Pastor Schuette came over the next morning to finalize funeral plans. I told him I preferred a private funeral and no visiting hours, but we did set up visiting hours after Ruthanna arrived.

Ronda picked her up at the airport after school. Ronda had left Vincennes U. at mid-term and was attending IU-Purdue in Ft. Wayne.

Ruthanna and I went to the funeral home and picked out a beautiful Oak casket--since George had spent so much of his life working with wood. We set the funeral services for Saturday at 1PM and picked pall bearers.(John Mason, Donald Sechler, Jim Dwyer, Merle Furnish, Jim Rinard and Forest Resor) We had visiting hours from 2 to 9 PM and many old friends from Ft Wayne, the GE, and Stillmans and old neighbors came.

For all the years of illness, he was a very beautiful corpse and very natural looking. My brother asked where his wrinkles were--well, he really didn't have any--only a few crows feet around his eyes. He aged well!

After the funeral and burial in Leo, Helen, Opal and Dorothy had lunch for all the family at Helen's house. Jane, Ann and Christopher broke down on the way and didn't make the funeral. However Tom Hursh, Davey and Stan took my car and picked them up after the funeral. Christopher and Christina had a ball playing out behind Helen's house with Ronda keeping them in tow. Jane, Ann and Chris stayed over and we took them to So.Bend the next day.

Ruthanna stayed for the week and we got all bills paid, the car in my name, and got ready to go to Michigan for Mary's wedding on the next Saturday.

Jim flew in to So. Bend, rented a car, picked up Jane and Ann and met us on the Toll Road to go together to the wedding. Ronda and Jill took us to the meeting place with the wedding gifts. We stopped in Lansing for lunch. Jim had made hotel reservations for all of us.

The wedding was at Tom's brother's and was a very pretty one. Sunday we headed back to Auburn and Jim and Ruthanna headed back to California.

Now I am alone. The neighbors and Nancy's family were most gracious to me. I soon went back to the Heimach Center daily. Memorials to George were so wonderful.: flowers and plants and \$1500 in money. I gave \$750 to the church and \$750 to Heimach Center. We gave flowers to Betz nursing home, the hospital and Meadowhaven nursing home. I tried to adapt to single living and did so quickly with God's help. It's now nearly 14 years later and I still miss him very much. We had 57 years of married life. We had sorrows and problems but the good times were far more than the sad ones.

I wouldn't take a million dollars for George as my husband, but I wouldn't give a nickel for another. When asked on a TV program to what did I attribute 57 good years of marriage, I said,"George pouted and I spouted and we never went to bed angry"

Now after 6 years of constant care for George, I'm alone. With God's help., Davey's family and good friends I'll keep smiling. I'll spend most of my time at Heimach Center with Char, Sandy, Fern and Mabel.

I'm very happy at St.Mark's church. I go to the early service and then often to Auburn House for Breakfast. Sometimes Anita and Stan Bremer and girls come for church and we go to Richard's. Also sometimes I have breakfast with Sally Walsh, Betty Albright and others.

Time doesn't stand still, for which I'm very thankful. I play cards with Iris Powell, Harriet Yarian, Thelms Grash Sandy and others at Heimach Center. A good friend of Roy Maxwell's , Evelyn Shafer met and married Harold Hamman at the center. Some of the widowers shine up to me but no dice. I'm not in the least interested. I've become friends with Florence Hullinger, Annie Smith, Theo Dennis, Hildred Dennis and Helen Bartels. We eat and visit at Heimach, make cancer pads, puppets for children who come to DeKalb Hosp. or pack food for shut-ins.

It's June 1981, and we just traveled to Northern Michigan by bus. We went to a ski resort-a gorgeous place. We have had a picnic, a banquet,;visited a breakfast food company, a winery, a candle shop and many other interesting places. I had just returned from California and had had a leg inflammation, but was able to make the trip.

Several other trips followed. In the meantime, Sandy had organized a "Lunch Bunch" of 30 people who went out to eat once a month. That fell on to me too when Sandy got mad and quit in September. We struggled hard and finally a new director: Janine Hirschy. She was very friendly and did a lot for the Center. After a year or so she was not working out and was asked to leave. Six months later we hired Meg Zink. I had struggled to keep the Center going and was offered the director's job which I would not have for love nor money. Everything was in good shape when Meg took over--Taxes, Soc. Security, IRA, etc were all up to date.

I was sorry to leave just when Meg came on the job, but our granddaughter, Lisa, was going to be married and I went to California for a month. Lisa and I were very busy and became close-knit as we tied up the details for the wedding--as her Mom was working. For a week after the wedding the Maxwell house was Grand Central Station with Marty, Ronda, and Casey Fogle and Tom, Mary, and Erik Peterson staying on. Mary had aerobics classes every afternoon. I returned to Auburn after a month.

Between my canasta buddies: Theo, Hildred, and Helen and the Center, I didn't have time to get lonely. Ruthanna came to Indiana and I spent Christmas in California. I was on the transportation committee and Char and I planned many trips for the Center.

In 1987, Patty Allison came to talk to me about starting a nursery school. The idea was that mothers were too busy to rock little ones, they needed a few hours a week for themselves, children needed to learn to play and share with others, etc. As I write this in 1996, I'm serving my 8th year as volunteer in the Playschool Nursery and I love it!! I wish I had a bigger lap and a twin sized rocking chair as two are about my limit to hold at one time. They are jealous of me but I try to share my time. Jeanette Cherry, the director, is one great person and a marvelous organizer.

I spent time at the Center and also at RSVP --Retired Senior Volunteer Program. I put in many hours for which they get the credit. I write a column in the Evening Star, help in the library, work for the Red Cross bloodmobile, the United Way and the Chamber of Commerce.

Plus I use my telephone a lot to cheer up shut-ins and those who are lonely.

My family continued to grow and by 1994 I had 14 great grandchildren. Jane married Kim Henke and he had two daughters also. It's a great feeling to have such a great, great family. I consider my daughter-in-law Nancy and son-in-law Jim the greatest of all. Nancy's second husband, Charles Fogle, I love very much. All the grandchildren have wonderful mates and children. Without the grandchildren and their help, I wouldn't be able to stay in Indiana.

I love the wonderful attention Nancy gives me. Sometimes I feel maybe I should move to California but Indiana is my home.

In the years 1981 to 1986, I have many great honors come to me. I have my walls covered with plaques; for services to DeKalb Co. Council on Aging, as the Older Hoosier salute, the March of Dimes walkathon. In 1991 I received the Sagamore on the Wabash award from Governor Evan Bayh. With it came a kiss from the governor lots of pictures and publicity. I was completely surprised and overwhelmed. I was Grand Marshall of the Fourth of July parade in St. Joe and Grand Marshall of the DeKalb Co. Fair annual parade in 1995.

In July 1993 I spent a month in California. My daughter and husband took me to Yellowstone for 10 days. We spent a night in Jackson Hole where we attended a rodeo.. We arrived in Yellowstone bright and early before the gatekeeper did. Ruthanna took her bike and surveyed the empty camping spots and picked out a beautiful one on the bank of Yellowstone River which led into the lake. We had breakfast and started exploring the beautiful woods. In the PM they rode their bikes to go fishing and I walked around, sat in the sun and inhaled the odor of pines, and watched the fish jump in the river below where fishing was prohibited. Those 10 days we saw what ruination fire can do and how rapidly Nature replaced what it had destroyed. Their motor home is very comfortable and although the nights were cool, the days were enjoyable. George, Davey and I had spent 3 days in Yellowstone and the memories of geysers, sulphur pots were kindled again. Old Faithful was at its best. I enjoyed every minute of it including the traveling. I also was fortunate to go with them to several Bluegrass festivals...

in 1993, I began volunteering at the Chamber of Commerce . It was nearly time for ACD days. Anita Getz was the new director. I never answered a phone so much in my life. It was great talking to all types of people across the US and getting ACD packets ready for mailing. Housing is always at a premium at this time of year for all motels in Ft. Wayne and Auburn are full. By Thursday before Labor Day, I had to leave the C.C. and spend my time at the RSVP getting ready for the quilt show. I worked in the kitchen, checked in quilts with Ann Kelham, took tickets at the door, and sold quilt raffle tickets for the hundreds. As usual , I talked too much and by Sunday I had lost my voice. On Monday I was more than miserable and I had just called to say I wouldn't be at Nursery school for Tuesday opening. My head felt like a freight train was running through it and I sort of blacked out. My good neighbors, Melba and Butch rushed me to DeKalb Memorial hospital. They called Nancy and Charlie who with Ronda came to the hospital to stay with me.

I had a million tests, cat scans, E.K.G. 's , X-rays, and was seen by at least four doctors. The next morning I was told I could go to the bathroom wearing a heart monitor.

Half way through my bath, I was ordered back to bed to finish my bath. Dr.Hathaway came in early and told me I would need a pacemaker and Dr. Hazen, a cardiologist would see me. Soon Dr. Hazen came in and filled me in all the tests and gave me the same decision: a pacemaker was necessary. While he was talking to me, the E.M.S. medics came in and rushed me off to Lutheran Hosp. We were not able to contact any of the family and Ronda and little Charlie came up later and found my bed empty . She was on her way home with the news. She had turned in my column, mailed my bills and made a stop at the grocery where she chanced to meet Dr Hathaway who filled her in on the details and gave her a 800 number to call me at any time.

I was put on the 4th floor--the heart section , and was prepared for surgery at once. Dr Zee Chang came to my room and explained the procedure again. About 1:30 I was taken to a small surgical room . I was strapped to a narrow cot, hands and feet tied down and a small tent over my head. I had been given a nerve pill and was quiet, but a bit concerned--all alone and not too certain what was about to happen. I was painted with iodine and the cutting began.

Thank Heavens I could not see any of the performance and could only hear a little humming noise. Time passed and I needed to go to the bathroom badly. Dr Chang told me to go on the cot which I did but I was really embarrassed--but after 3 1/2 hours. Then strip after strip of tape was applied and I was back in my room at about 5 PM.. Nancy and Ronda were waiting for me. . I was given Tylenol with Codeine and never had any pain. I was allowed to sit in a chair to eat my evening meal. I had a good stay at the hospital , the nurses were great except for one crabby one. Ronda took me home to her house on Saturday and I stayed the next night at Nancy's. Then I went home--even went out for breakfast.

I progressed fine (with medication changes since the Cardizem was too strong) I could not reach my left arm above my shoulder or even lay on the left side or do any lifting for several weeks.

Bless Ronda-- she came weekly and ran the sweeper, washed and changed the bedding, and took me shopping. I had no appetite and I weighed in at the hospital at 141 but by Christmas I was down to 121.

In spite of the pacemaker, I went back to nursery school in about three weeks and went to California for the holidays and a 6 -wk. stay.

While in California, we went to San Diego, to Escondido to Welk's ranch and entertainment center and to Blythe to a bluegrass festival. I picked up a virus over Christmas, but a trip to the clinic and a round of medicine and I was up and going again. We saw Show Boat at Welk's and although it was the 3rd time I had seen it, I can not tell you how marvelous it was performed. We had ring side seats so I could see and hear well. The buffet was great too. We took the motor home and stayed about 5 miles from Welk's where the scenery was out of this world.

The year 1993 was a very memorable one for me. I have no idea what all the bills were but Medicare and Insurance covered thousands. So much for 1993..

I will backtrack a little to 1982. Going to Florida had been such a joy and we had made so many friends that in the winter of 1982, I decided to go down in early March. I had my plane reservations when Fred Fillman, my step-sister's husband, died. Dorothy ,my sister , came home since she had power-of-attorney for him.

I then changed my flight so I could return with her. Helen Koch and Tom Hursh were down there to visit and Woodrow and Opal, and Paul and Kathryn all lived there. Nancy Vendrely came down on Saturday. I spent a week in Mid-Florida lakes and left on Tuesday.

I took a bus to Sarasota and checked in to a motel on NWashington St. where Joe and Rose Walsh were staying. Other couples we had known before were there. Also at the motel were two sisters of the Secret Service man who was wounded when Pres. Reagan was shot.

They were the Baker girls and great company. Joe and Rose were so nice to me but I felt like a 5th wheel with the couples so often the sisters and I would go alone to eat. I went to a few Sox games and saw Rose Scherman, the Woodfords, Father Glennon and his sister and truly enjoyed myself, but it was not the honeymoon George and I had experienced for more than 20 years. I almost bought a cottage near Dorothy's but I am glad I didn't. I would be alone there for Opal and Dorothy are dead, Paul and Kathryn have moved to North Carolina and Woodrow is in a nursing home. If I left Auburn it should be to California.

I like it here but the rent gets higher every year.. For the first few years it did not change but since that it has gone up \$185 per month--and I still have the same carpet, etc.

Life goes on and it is not too pleasant living alone, although Davey's family are extra good to me. Ronda is so much like her Dad that I could never forget him.

Until 1993, I spent much time at Heimach Center but when it moved out on Seventh Street I didn't go there. Playschool became my choice and always will be as long as I can put up with runny noses and teary eyes and rock those little ones.

In August 1994, Ronda had a surprise party for my 90th birthday before I went to California for granddaughter Jane's wedding. I mean she truly surprised me! Nancy had invited me to her house to play cards and just as we started, Ronda called asking to come eat with them. I thought nothing of all the cars in the driveways or the police car parked across the road. I was really surprised when all the family yelled "Happy Birthday" What a send off for the trip next morning to Riverside.

On Sunday a week later, the Maxwells and VanMeters had refreshments after the church service. I had helped prepare fresh fruit, buy plates, napkins, etc never once suspecting it was going to be a party for me. I knew Mary was getting a cake for the occasion. Ruthann had gone to the early service and met us and said "Mom, come in here to the Fellowship hall" where she showed me the huge cake. Jim followed with the camera and took pictures. She knew Pastor Brad would mention it during his announcements and she didn't want me to be too shocked.

What a party with over 120 people singing 'happy birthday' and a little 4yr old hugging me(Kyle) Two great parties for an old lady was truly amazing and I hope I really showed my gratitude.

In May, 1995, I made a rush trip to the hospital with a bleeding ulcer . It took a lot of tests and an upper G.I. to locate the source. Dr. Paul found it. A hiatal hernia which a bit of aspirin got into and corroded causing the bleeding ulcer. Don't ever let anyone make you swallow that tube through the nose to the stomach.. Just talking--it was terrible but necessary.

I had a couple evenings of fun. I volunteered at the Ft. Wayne Parks and Recreation's opening of some of the pools. I worked with June Stone who does balloon sculptures. She takes those skinny little balloons of all colors, fives them a stretch and makes all types of animals. I drew mouths, ears, eyes, stripes, and spots on them. I'm far from being an artist but I did my best.

I started volunteering at NATMUS (National automotive and truck museum).. It is so different than any museum I have ever visited. I discovered I knew one of the volunteer's husband. He had the trucking service for Stillman's and I knew him quite well.

I always worked in the doughnut stand at the fair. Sold hundreds of dozens of doughnuts and talked to hundreds of people of all types.

I also helped with the library Halloween party and other times that they need me. The usual round of Christmas parties were attended also: The Evening Star, RSVP, and others.

I continue to worry about Charlie. He has cancer, diabetes, lung problems and undergoes one treatment after another. I am really upset and feel so sorry for Nancy and there is so little I can do. When he is feeling good we play cards with Dortha --the four of us. Once in a while Charlie and I beat them. Ruthanna made a trip home in May mainly to see him because he was in the hospital and not doing well. (He surprised us all by getting better and returning to fair health)

We all went to Christina's graduation and party while Ruthanna was home. Her parents went all out and there must have been 100 people there.

Also Warren and Betty Fitch came and spent Sunday afternoon with us. Ruthanna was so pleased because she had not seen them for years. They looked over pictures and reminisced.

On June 27 th I went to the children's program at the library. It was the second program on Pioneer days. It featured early music. Merle Coburn, Jim's old friend, entertained with dulcimer music and played a saw with a violin bow! It was great. A young violinist played and then Deb took over with her guitar and the kids sang like troopers.

It's June 21st--first day of summer and the longest day of the year. But to me it was much more. On June 21st, 1924, at 4 PM in the Lutheran parsonage, my best friend (George Doll) mutually agreed to give up single happiness and be a team. We promised to be faithful until death do us part. We kept those vows for 57 years

Luella Smith (Woodrow's 'wife') died Sept. 25th after weeks of suffering following an auto accident. Ronda and I went to the funeral.

I hadn't been to the doctor all year and since I was so very tired all of the time I made an appointment for Sept. 29th. Everything seemed fine except I had an irregular heart beat. He ordered an EKG and on Monday I was asked to come into the office to talk to him. He told me I had atrial fibrillation.. The chances of blood clotting and having stroke were possible. I was given several choices and was started on Coumadin, a blood thinner. I will need to get a blood test at least every two weeks and will be limited in foods with a lot of vitamin K.

Broccoli and cauliflower are my favorite veggies and they are high in Vit.K. I take one pill promptly at 5 PM each day but that may be changed if the blood test shows it is needed.

In October, Dorothea and I visited Charlie's 4th grade class as substitute grandparents. They had reading and then arithmetic--I found they were using a way of adding that I have always used. Then the teacher pulled up a shade on the blackboard and announced "Charles Fogle is our honor student of the month" He had never mentioned it and kept on doing his work until she asked him to stand.

Photos of him from birth on up covered the board. Then she introduced me and asked me to talk. I talked a few minutes saying I was probably the oldest one there and I spoke a few words about my school days in a one room school, etc. She insisted that I come back and talk to the "Little Hoosiers", a group of 4th graders who meet after school once a month---I had done this for Casey when he was in 4th grade. I still have notes from the kids in Casey's class. I've promised to continue my talks on my school days to two groups at the library.

I mentioned on that some places were out of boxed Christmas cards by December 1st. The wrong person heard and Ronda very kindly sent me some. Too many but I'll save them. Nancy came one evening bringing me some homemade cookies from herself and cards from Ronda. Either I should learn to keep my mouth shut or expect results

. The Christmas party given by the Evening Star was on Sunday, December 15th and Betty Dilgard and I attended. There was a large crowd and a well planned evening awaited us. Although we were seated next to the serving table we were last to eat as they started from the opposite side of the room. There was plenty of food still available. Dan Kurtz (Editor of the paper) and his wife, who had spend the weekend in Bloomington visiting their son in I.U., were a bit late in getting back to Auburn. They shared our table with 3 others, a couple and a young man. It was an enjoyable evening but the music got louder and louder and the room became smoke bound so we left early. She wanted to drive around and see the Christmas decorated homes. Two in my neighborhood were beautiful and she insisted on driving out past her home to see the next door beautifully adorned yard and buildings. Ron Dickey's wife and young son live there. He is an insurance salesman and she operates the License Bureau in Garrett.

It was out of this world and she does most of the work. One wonders how many hook-ups and extension cords make such a display possible. She was a Spencerville girl (Cobb) and I knew them from St. Mark's church. We were home by 9:30. The week ahead was a very busy one for me since I planned to go west on the 22nd. Since Charlie had been ill, Nancy was pretty much shut-in and each week she kept inviting Dortha Schrader and I to come and eat and then play cards. We felt like Red Skelton who called himself the "Free Loader" but we went anyway. Thursday Dec. 19th was the last day of Nursery School and our Christmas Party. Several mothers came in and did most of the work. When I came home with 2 large shopping bags of gifts, I was astounded! 15 gifts!! I had 1/2 of my dining room table full. I took a look at them, made certain each one had a name on them and after showing them to several, I put them back in the bags and set them in my bedroom until I returned. Cookies and gingerbread were either eaten or frozen and candy would keep. The little Jamaican girl gave me a beautiful angel night light and 2 other unusual gifts. I unpacked those that were in the bags after I came back from California.

On Friday night Nancy had the family for dinner, but had to work and Davey's family were absent. The Pence's picked me up and brought me home. Saturday I got my hair done and packed the carry on bag and the grey weekender. I check everything through. Saturday evening Nancy called and wanted me to go with them and Ronda's family to eat out. I really had leftovers that I wanted to use up but I went anyway. We met one of the Timmerman girls at McDonald's. That was Charlie's choice of place, and since he had just had a birthday we took his suggestion. After eating, Marty and the boys and Charlie went to Ft. Wayne Christmas shopping and Ronda, Nancy and I came home. Nancy called Dortha who came over and we played Skipbo. Sunday came quickly and I was all packed by noon ready to go to the airport by 4 O'clock. Nancy and Charlie took me to the plane and after I was already to go to the gate, I insisted that Nancy and Charlie go on home. The plane left on time and we made excellent time getting to Chicago even a bit early. I had a two hour lay-over in Chicago and we were a bit late in leaving there. The pilot said we have a tail wind so we will probably land in Ontario early. I thought the ride was going exceptionally well but we seemed to be in the same place a long time after the pilot announced we would be landing in about 15 minutes.

He said the temperature is 65 degrees and it's a little windy in Ontario. After what seemed like hours he announced "The winds are very strong in Ontario, so I will circle the field again as we have lots of fuel and then if they won't let me land I'll take you to Los Angeles airport and bus you to Ontario." Some planes were landing but United said "No" to their pilots. We landed in Los Angeles and walked the full length of the airport to sort out our luggage.

I had checked three pieces and I told the girl at the desk and she was very sweet and kind and said, "Don't worry, just go to the Red Cap and tell him." We got my luggage on a cart and waited for a bus. I got on the first one as directed but when we arrived in Ontario my luggage wasn't on the bus. Our driver had unloaded his bus 1 1/2 blocks from the entrance although he was told to take us to the door. By the time I found no luggage I started to walk toward the gate and a young lady came along on the other side of the fence. I inquired as to whether I was going the right way and she said, "keep going to the end of the fence and I'll meet you there and walk with you." By that time Ruthanna came running because she couldn't find me. We thanked the young lady and she said, "I would have taken good care of your Mother. I came out here because of the driver's error." Soon we were on our way to Riverside.

I need to back up a little and tell of my trip from Ft. Wayne to Chicago. A young man sitting in the middle seat of the on I sat in started talking and what a surprise. He was going home to Riverside to visit his parents. His dad had recently retired from Fleetwood and his parents lived in Riverside. They had formerly lived in Benton Harbor, Michigan and his dad had worked for Avion trailers and had been transferred to Riverside. His dad had worked with Jim at Fleetwood and he and his wife were enjoying each other's company while awaiting our arrival. What a small world after all!! He knew Nancy McNabb and her parents and was happy to learn I knew her and her parents so well. We had a very enjoyable visit all the way to Chicago but I didn't see him after we got to Chicago.

I got back to the Maxwell's at midnight their time (3 A.M. ours) to unwind a bit. Ruthanna and I hung the clothes from the big bag and I took out the toilet articles I needed from the shoulder bag, washed my face and crawled into bed. We were up and going about 9 A.M. their time and I adjusted quickly as usual to 3 hour time difference. The weather was nice--not hot but very comfortable so we spent the next two days grocery shopping, making candy and visiting. Ann, Bill and Christopher arrived at noon on Wednesday.

Ann, Ruthann and I went to 5 P.M. Christmas eve service. Ruthanna had made 3 kinds of soup, dessert and fresh bread already so the evening meal would be ready pretty much on time. She and I played Canasta on Monday and Tuesday nights and were so doing on Wednesday when the Links arrived loaded with gifts and goodies.

They bring their gifts for themselves along and have Christmas for the Links early Christmas forenoon. Ruthanna had a beautiful tree and by the time everyone's gifts were under or around it the sight was out of this world... We had a great Christmas Day. I had to crawl in bed a while as I don't take confusion too well and I'm sorry about that. Kyle was ill and I missed his part in the day's activities. Ann and family planned to stay until Saturday and I was glad because we get to see them so seldom. The family were all home for leftovers on Friday night and by then Trevor wasn't feeling up to par, although Ann, Ruthanna and I had met the Van Meters for shopping on Friday A.M. and the boys seemed O.K. Ann, Bill and Christopher left Saturday after lunch. Jim, Ruthanna and I sort of put the furniture back where it belonged and decided to relax a while. Jim spent some time in the garage where he was very busy making a new set of desks, drawers, etc. for the North end of the kitchen. We planned to go to family church at 8:45 but I had coughed all night long and said on Sunday morning "I just can't go". I spent the day just lying around and coughing. I took Sudafed which usually does the job but by Tuesday I was running out of medicine and Lisa went to the drugstore for more. By that night and the next morning I was really sick. Jim had it and Ruthanna was getting it. I've been sick seriously several times but Wednesday between Christmas and New Years was the worst ever. Without Ruthanna's determined insistence that I eat or drink something every few minutes and her excellent care -even though she was down on one davenport and me on the other-I'm sure I wouldn't be here to talk about it. Jim had a doctor's appointment on Monday and he said there's nothing medically that will do the trick, just rest and consume a lot of liquids. It was easy to rest as one was so sleepy all of the time. On Thursday morning Ruthanna put the heater in the little bathroom, put a stool in the shower stall and I had a good shower and a shampoo. I got my face washed and dropped the soap and found I needed help to even pick it up. After a real use of the towels Ruthanna dried my hair and curled it. We both felt much better.

The heat and the moisture really helped a lot. After 2 weeks of coughing, it quit as suddenly as it started. We just enjoyed time together. Jim worked feverishly on his kitchen project and it was nearly finished when I left. Ruthanna's new desk was in place and this week she sent me a picture of the finished venture. They each have new desks, plenty of drawer space and a great computer set up. The entire job was finished in birch color and Jim is a perfectionist and he does one great job. Really, I'm very proud to have him as a son-in-law. We didn't make it to San Diego but it was a great 6 weeks.

I had a clean bed the whole time I was there with fresh linens dried in the fresh air and sunshine. We had some rainy days but California always needs rain. Jim installed a new hot water heater while I was there and the pool repair man was busy getting the pool ready for use hopefully soon. Mark took his grandma, Jim and I and Ruthanna, and his family out for supper for Grandma's birthday. I keep saying my trip was an unusual one and probably my last as I hate to travel as I get a bit more clumsy and slightly helpless, but time will tell.

I got home on Feb. 5th, although we were slightly late getting out of Chicago. Charlie and Nancy picked me up in Ft. Wayne and after stopping at the apartment for a warmer coat, we had dinner at Richards and I was ready to unpack and get settled in. My plants looked fine and one violet is starting to bloom again now. I miss two things about California; fresh flowers on the table and laundry dried outdoors--plus Canasta playing in the evening. No laundry, no cooking and only a little dusting for 6 weeks. I wanted to work in the yard but my endurance was a bit short. The camellias and other small flowers were available and ready to be made into a pretty table centerpiece. I'm not a florist, for sure, but I enjoyed making one whenever needed. I have loved the many trips I've taken West but will miss them but do what seems best as time goes by.

I got home in time for Valentine's Day at school. Several mothers came in to provide cookies and games for the kids and I came home with a huge sack of Valentines and treats. The Bloodmobile at the Methodist Church on the 17th was a success. We had 11 people turned away because of various health problems but no one there refused to make a future appointment.

On Friday a week ago Ronda came up to shop and took me home with her to have supper at Nancy's. Sonda and daughters and Dortha were there also. Little Micala is so sweet. She was even very friendly with Dortha and i. When we got ready to leave she grabbed her coat to go along and as we drove away she was sitting on the basement steps waving good-bye. We were down to Nancy's on Sunday for cards and dinner. Nancy is pretty much confined to home and company helps. Wednesday of this past week (March 11), Ronda came up to clean my house and brought Nancy along. I protested but it did no good! Ronda swept the whole apartment, cleaned the bathroom and washed up both the kitchen and bathroom floors.

I did some dusting and Nancy dusted the knickknacks. By 11:30 all was done and we went to lunch. Nancy wanted to go to Wal-Mart and the dollar store and then we went to Scott's grocery shopping. It was a great day. Nancy has been having a lot of stomach problems; I'm certain a lot comes from nerves as she said she felt fine after her day up here. I begged her to come again not to clean but just to get away a bit. I gave her some extra strong Mylanta tablets and she says they do the trick. I hate to be a burden but arguing does no good so I'll keep letting them do what they want to do! I got to see Corey play basketball and no doubt about it, he will be a great basketball player. All three are registered to play summer ball and Ronda has been helping with that and a million other things.

Nursery school is great as always. We had Pooh Bear Party last Friday and most kids brought a Pooh Bear for Show and Tell and one mom made rice crispy snacks in the shapes of "Pooh" heads. The class now more than 6 months in session has improved but a few spoil it for those who really try to make the best of everything offered to them. They are so different than their brothers or sisters we had 10-12 years ago. They try one's patience (3 of them) almost beyond the 9th degree but I love them so I continue to go back for more. This past week I've tried so hard to keep from getting a type of flu I had the past 3 years and so far so good. This past week was spring vacation in DeKalb County schools all but Eastern DeKalb (Butler and St.Joe). We operate on the same schedule at Nursery school. I practically did nothing but rest and do odds and ends and didn't even get around to writing until today. Nancy and Charlie have colds that seem not to want to go away so I haven't seen them.

Just talked to Ronda-she said she forgot I didn't have school. She's so busy helping get Summer Ball enlistments completed and tomorrow they will assign kids to the various teams. All three boys will be playing again.

. I read an article last week about a T.V. host asking famous people about the subject of age to retire. One lady questioned was Lady Bird Johnson and her answer was "My dad always answered that question 'Three days before the funeral', and that is what I plan to do if possible."

Charlie's cancer is now in remission and he goes to the ball games. He, Nancy and Dortha came over 2 weeks ago and we played Skipbo. Surprisingly, Charlie and I won 2 games. Blood mobile is still doing fine here.

At the last one in April we had 3 new ones and a man who hadn't given for 9 years, but promised to give regularly from now on.

I've decided to have one eye operated on now. Date May 28. It can be done here in Auburn and after care all done here. The firm of Faust and Gavin who have a clinic near the Lutheran Hospital and a large one in Marion, Indiana have a limo and a van and furnish transportation. The van picked me up a week ago and took me to Ft. Wayne for all preliminary work. My eyes have gradually gotten worse so it's time, I guess, to do something. However, at my age I'm not certain but very hopeful of the results.

The week before Mother's Day was a rat race. Election Day here and very few people voted anywhere in Indiana. Three Klu Klux people were on the ballot but got very few votes. That Friday night after a pacemaker check Nancy had a birthday party at Ronda's for Dortha. The night before Mother's Day, Nancy took me out for dinner and then she, Dortha and I played cards. I was hoping to be alone on Mother's day but Ronda called and insisted I go to evening dinner with the Fogles, including Charlie and Nancy.

Later in the week Nancy and Ronda came up and cleaned, swept, dusted, cleaned floors and bathroom for me. Little Charlie even helped. I missed Thursday school this week as Ronda came up, too me to the greenhouse for my porch flowers. She scrubbed my porch, walls, floor and the furniture first. We went to Penguin Point for lunch then did more shopping for her and went to the grocery.

Lee and Carol, who adopted me three years ago as their mother, brought me a beautiful hanging basket on Mother's Day and I got many cards and gifts also from Nancy and Charlie. It is difficult for me to write so hopefully after May 28 things will be better. Tomorrow Ruthanna will arrive and I'm truly getting anxious. I am now wearing her Mother's Day gift and using the money from her and Jim.

Ruthanna arrived Monday evening of May 17th. We had a snack and she unpacked her bag and we visited a while. Tuesday a.m. was blood mobile and we went as usual. Ruthanna really helped a lot and I just took it easy and supervised. We had a good turn out and made our quota. Tuesday nite we played our first game of Canasta. We seemed to be too busy to have too many games but squeezed a few in each time the opportunity came up. On Thursday night after a day of surgery we played again, final results: Ruthanna 10 games and me 12. I had to win that night to even catch up. School was out Thursday, May 21st. Ronda made me some cute little good-bye cards and Ruthanna and I added a Hershey's kiss and a hug to the already pretty card. The great grandkids' ballgames were in full swing. We went to see Corey, Charlie and Andrea's games. Casey didn't have any while Ruthanna was here and I didn't get to see him all year. Nancy and girls planned a get-together at Tonda's on Sunday before Ruthanna went home. Everyone was there but Davey, who was in Indy for races, and Bob, who kindly stayed home with Tabitha, who was very ill. After a few days she licked her illness and was O.K. We went to Corey's 6th grade commencement on Tuesday evening and stopped at Ronda's for ice cream cake, which I turned down.

We grocery shopped on Wednesday as I knew I would need a few things after the eye correction. Thursday arrived and we were at DeKalb Memorial at 6:15 for my 6:30 appointment. It was like Old Home Week. Greeting us as we got off the elevator on the 2nd floor was Ann Furnish and Bonnie Johnson plus two or three more nurses. What a welcome! Ann told us that Dr. Pepple always helped Dr. Faust the specialist but that Dr. C.B. Hathaway came into the hospital the day before and looked at Dr. Faust's list and pointed to my name and said, "She is my patient and I will be with her." Very soon he appeared and I was happy. Karen Ringler, a nurse since back when Davey Lee was in the hospital, same as Ann and Bonnie came in to say Hello and wish me well! What a day! 100 drops, four at a time, are injected into the eye.

In the meantime a blood pressure band has been tightened on your arm and a metal thumb cover put on the opposite hand. An injection of a mild sedative to relax one was given; a small intravenous hooked to one's wrist and the process was full motion. At about 10 a.m. I was taken to the recovery room and soon I was on my way home. Dr. C.B. had gone over to the waiting room to talk to Ruthanna. She was feeling badly because she needed to go home the next morning but Jesse (upstairs) had said she would take me to the Dr. the next day and she did. I had to go to Dr. Morrow's again on Saturday. Everything looked O.K. but there was much swelling and I went back on Monday. On Saturday a week after the surgery I got the surprise of my life. When Ruthanna left on Friday a week before, she said, "Mom, when you can read the house number on that condo across the street, please call me."

When I went out to chase a squirrel, who I call Rebel, away from my flower pot I looked across the street and that number 409 was as plain as the nose on my face. I could see the real sunshine and the gorgeous trees the next day like I have not seen for ages and didn't realize it. Also a pair of canvas shoes I bought in Riverside as orange in color were actually watermelon as all of the Maxwells had told me. I saw many floaters in the air and black objects on everything white or light in color when I would waken after a night's sleep. So back to Dr. Marrow's office for an hour and one half of checking and he informed me my second eye would be done on Thursday, June 25th, only 4 weeks after the first one. But hey, the second one was so much easier than number 1. Dr. C.B. was there again.

Can you imagine a doctor being that caring and considerate? He was a wee bit late the second time as I got pushed ahead of two people but he came anyway. I went back on Friday for check-up and another on Monday. The report was that everything is looking great and not to let those floaters and black objects scare me. That Monday afternoon June 29th, I was sitting on the porch when the paper man threw me the Evening Star and believe it or not I read the entire paper with no glasses or reading glass. I continue not to read too much but it is great! I see colors which I never was certain about before. A small stapler which I have had for years proved to be rose and Melba's new porch chairs are dark green, not black, as I thought. I can easily tell navy from black. So much for the eyes.

I need to re-track to the Sunday at Tonda's house. Jane seemed to really enjoy her old family again and Tonda has such a nice home, with even a trapeze in the yard. I truly missed Ruthanna after her visit and still do. I'd awaken in the morning and look across the hall to see if she were up. I did the same thing daily for a couple of weeks after she left and catch myself looking to see where she might be several times a day. In a column in the paper about Mother's Day I spoke of the first big celebration in Grafton, West Virginia. 500 white roses decorated the chapel and each year that custom is repeated. May 10, 1908 was the first celebration.

My porch plants survived both the cold of May and the extreme heat of June but guess I need to give them plant food as they are not as nice as usual by now.

Ronda always gives me porch plants for Mother's Day and this was included. Yesterday would have been George's birthday and although 17 1/2 years have gone by, there is still a sad and vacant spot within my heart. I have many, many happy memories of those nearly 57 years we spent together and I'll never lose those memories plus a few sad ones which went with them. I try to keep busy at the library, with the column and the Red Cross. Nursery school will re-open September 8th, and I'll probably go back and try it but a new teacher and a new aide won't make it easy. I have 5 more days of eye drops and do not need to see the eye doctor until the first week in September. Eye care isn't cheap and those few hours in the hospital each time were almost \$2800.00 each time. The first ordeal is all paid now by Medicare and my insurance. I'm so happy I had it taken care of and everything except the pre-exam was done here in Auburn. This community should really be proud of DeKalb Memorial Hospital; it keeps expanding services and physicians all the time.

The library had its annual Reading Picnic on August 16th. About 400 were in attendance. It threatened rain in the morning but the sunshine won out and it was one great day. So many games were available and all the kids had goodie bags full of prizes and cotton candy, drinks, caramel corn and other snacks were there for the taking. I was the Lollypop Lady again for at least the 10th time and it's so great to see so many kids who have spent time reading books or having parents read to them. The library puts out a newsletter once a month and I made the first page of the August issue for my volunteering at the library and serving 10 years as Lollypop Lady.

Auburn has a beautiful library building and a great staff on duty at all times. I only live about 3 blocks from it and use it freely. I'm still on the R.S.V.P. board (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) but have only been there to meetings in March and August. I would like to have my name taken off as I have served a long time and I do not believe in lifetime terms in office even for Federal Judges. Dead wood doesn't do any good to an organization and I feel that I along with several others are just that. I plan to work for the quilt show but everything that comes up is cut and dried and the only motion ever made is one to adjourn and making money is the whole concern. Guess that is why I enjoy Red Cross and Nursery School. Yesterday, August 11th, I had a very pleasant surprise when 4 young people got off bicycles and came up on my porch saying Do you remember us? Three of the kids I had in the nursery school at ages 3, 4 & 5 and now they are in the 7th grade. Of course I remembered them, but the other little girl I had never had in school.

It was a real treat to have kids ask, "Can we still call you Grandma Frances?" We talked on the porch for a while and I asked if they would like some candy. . I treated them to Hershey's miniatures and gave them what they asked for to drink I passed the cookies which are a replica of Keebler's shortbread with chocolate covered bottoms and stripes of chocolate on the top. They were the supreme delight of playschool kids. They said "Oh, it's 3:50, and we have to be back by 4 p.m.". They hoped they could come back and I told them you will always be welcome. That made my day!!

Dr. Morrow's nurse awakened me so I got up to accept a change in time for my next appointment on September 11. This is a beautiful day. Sunshine and temperature still cool but will probably get to 80 by late p.m. The nights have been great to sleep. Only one night did I not cover with a blanket, and I did that before morning. We have had St. Joe Pickle Days and Covered Bridge Festival at Spencerville but I didn't go to either. Ronda's birthday was August 7th, during the pickle festival and Nancy and Mary had planned a surprise for her at Nancy's. But Marty, Corey and Charlie were in a fishing contest and didn't get home by 5 p.m. so Casey had to tell her because she was starting supper.

Bob was working so he couldn't come but the rest of the family, Dortha Schrader and even Nancy's brother Jerry were there. To be sure Micala was drawing every one's attention. Charlie is on new medicine, which the doctors hope will stop some of the shaking. He takes so many pills. .

I'm doing fine on Comadin. I had a blood test again yesterday and will have another in 2 weeks. I ceased the eye drops on Monday, August 24th. I got my glasses on August 19. Really, I can read and write without them but I wear them to save my eyes part of the time, especially if I am watching T.V. I have been watching Jeopardy and Wheel of Fortune for a while now and I certainly can answer a lot of questions but find there is very much I haven't ever heard of. My T.V. has a great picture and the sound and color are good. I always watch the news at least once a day. I truly have enjoyed my porch this summer. No mosquitoes and that is a surprise! The city didn't even spray. I share my porch with those who have none. Even Melba comes over to chat and sit when she has new chairs on her own. Charlie and Nancy come up about once a week and we play cards here or at Dorothea's .

Finally Charlie and I beat those 2 gals on 2 different nights. Dortha doesn't enjoy a loss but I told her "You and Nancy do all of the shuffling, so you can't say we stack the deck." With 3 boys having ball games, the Fogles are pretty busy. Casey got to play on the Varsity team last Friday night and the Saturday Evening Star gave Eastside top billing. Auburn has played 2 football games as far and got beat both games while Eastside beat their opponents in both games. Last night they beat Prairie Heights and Casey got 4 touchdowns. He is probably one of the smallest on the team. Corey has his first football game tomorrow night and Charlie will start next week. All three boys wrestle and Corey and Charlie are about over the patches of warts they had and which the doctor said they probably got from the mats while wrestling. Tabitha started to school this year. DeKalb County schools started early this year. Auburn started August 18th, Garrett August 19th and Eastside and Riverdale on August 24th. I had a pacemaker test on August 24th and came out with flying colors. New equipment puts everything in the computer. Takes a very short time but is very accurate and informative. Medicare requires one every 2 months after the pacemaker in 3 years old. I had an allergy last week and had to finally go to the doctor.

He gave me a prescription for 5 pills to be taken 5 hours apart and it did the trick. If not, I would have needed another round in 3 days. I was lucky for a change. My eyes are doing great but I have black patches when I awaken. I guess I'll put up with that. This weekend is the annual C.D. Festival.

Kruse plantation is running over with cars for the auction, which starts Thursday evening. Several celebrities' cars are on the block this year. Auburn will truly be alive and I'll work at the quilt show Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

October 28th

The ACD festival was a great success. The weather was ideal! Warm and sunny. I spent the 3-day weekend at the quilt show. Crowds were good and I did my best to sell a lot of tickets on the sampler quilt and talked about R.S.V.P. until I was hoarse. I told visitors about the real work and aim of the group. Volunteers are their true way of existence and growth and I'm proud to be a part of their program. Our car quilt sold at auction for \$11,000. This is the second quilt to bring that price. The people who bought it own a restaurant and a museum near Indianapolis and they purchased their first quilt at the auction in 1997.

Nursery school has been in session for more than 7 weeks. Our attendance has been good but we have many little snotty noses and one little girl (a great-granddaughter of our good friends Merle and Mariam Furnish) who has cried most of the time. Tuesday of this past week I simply refused, in a nice way, to have any part of her crying. I told her "McKenna, please put your blanket on the shelf, stop that crying and start playing with the kids. " She sobbed a bit and then obeyed. She did great with painting her pumpkin, her visit to the library and then 20 minutes in the Loud Room. She played, laughed and shared with the other kids. About 10 minutes before time to go home, I took her to Jo Ellen, her Grandma, smiling and laughing and yelling. What a pleasant little girl. I just ignored her crying and it quit. Now I'm hoping for good days from now on. For three years in a row we have had twins in our class. I have learned so much about twins and their nearness and love of each other. Needless to say, I've many who call me Grandma Frances besides my own 15 great-grandkids. Paul Harris, whom I had when he was 5 years old, called me last night. He's now in the 7th grade and will be walking in a marathon for the Youth of Christ program here in Auburn. I helped support him one year ago and he was one of the kids who visited me during the summer.

Nancy had a party for Marty, Ronda and all of the family who had birthdays in August and September. Davey's family didn't make it but Jill and Davey stopped to see me on Sunday p.m. Christina is back at I.U.

Casey and Melissa are waiting for an appointment with the driver's examiner to check them and award them their licenses. Casey had a car and practiced driving a lot with Marty or Ronda. They bought him a Nova and plan to have it checked and refinished very soon. With 3 kids involved in summer baseball or softball, then football, basketball and wrestling, Marty and Ronda are truly busy. Scouts are also a part of their lives plus church and school. Mary works every other Saturday plus his usual schedule. Ronda is busy cleaning new homes plus work at school, has a Cub Scout troop and even teaches catechism. Sonda is now working as an aide at Riverdale School. She waited patiently for almost a year until it became a reality.

Today is another gorgeous fall day! The sun is trying very hard to come out although it rained a bit and was a little foggy this a.m. It was 70 degrees here yesterday and the same predicted for today.

The trees are covered with red and gold leaves but the past couple of days they are coming down like mad. Election Day is less than 1 week away. I promised to work on the board so Melba and I will go to a pre-election information meeting tonight. The pay is much better this year; \$85 for the board and \$15 for meals. People need to get out and vote! Senior citizens and young people are very poor voters and both of them have a lot at stake. Maybe we older folks don't set a very good example by not going to the polls. If I could have voted at age 18, I would have grabbed the opportunity.

Friday, October 30th is an apple carnival for youth. There is no school that day in DeKalb County so we will probably have a large crowd. I'm going to be the cider lady. Charlie is back on cancer treatment again. One each week. They are trying a new drug given intravenously and so far things have gone well.

The apple carnival was a success that proved our Children's Department at the library knows how to entertain kids! More than 200 came and many parents. We used nearly 6 gallons of cider. The kids had gift bags with food, coupons and prizes almost filled as they came to eat. They made their own apple sandwiches as directed. Crafts, games and contests were held in other part of the library. I wore the old black calico outfit I had for the Stillman's 100th anniversary. Aunt Opal had made it for me with material provided by the store.

nmIt is getting so old that I fear it will fall apart when I wash it. It must be 35 years old.

Each year the Kiwanis club bakes pumpkin bread for sale on two weekends in November. This year it is the 6th, 7th, 13th and 14th. Local merchants offer it for sale and net proceeds go to a school for children with special needs. I bought one yesterday and it is so good. We have a new tenant upstairs. He was here for a couple of years and left about 2 years ago as he was transferred to Texas. I did not know it before but he works for Fleetwood and is gone to other plants than Garrett part of the time. He is married and his wife is still in Texas..

I finally decided to go to California for the holidays. Ruthanna and girls didn't want to take No for an answer when I sort of refused to come. I have a reservation for December 22 at 8:45 from Ft. Wayne and a return from Ontario on January 21 for \$240.00. So I'll spend 30 days in Riverside through the generosity of Ruthanna and Jim.

Dortha, Nancy, Charlie and I had supper at Ronda's a couple of weeks ago and Sonda's family joined a bit later. Those boys of Ronda's really love Mikala and she loves them. Her hair seems to be getting redder and redder. We have had temperatures in the 50s or 60s for the past ten days. There is a lot of intestinal flu or a virus around and I believe normal December temperatures would probably get rid of it. Lots of kids are out of school. Hopefully I can see Dr. C.B. one day this week as I am having some out-of-balance occurrences and ear problems and I haven't been to the office for a long time. The R.S.V.P. recognition dinner was Thursday December 3rd. Melissa Long, a news gal from station WPTA in Ft. Wayne was the guest speaker for the day. She looks so different in person than on T.V. She is built like Nancy Vendrely; her height is from the waist down. About 150 guests were served lunch. 38 of these had at least 500 volunteer hours for the past year. I had 700+. There were 3 ladies there over 90 years old and I was the only one to get the 500 hours honor.

Nancy had Thanksgiving at the community building in Spencerville. It was a long day. We didn't get home until about 9:30. Nancy's family cleaned up the hall before we left. as the table, chairs, etc. She will have Christmas there also.

Had a letter from Kathryn Dean the past week. She really has her hands too full. Paul can't see a thing anymore and his legs give out. With much help and a cane, he can get to the table to eat and to the bathroom.

Everett and Joyce had their entire family except Tim home for Thanksgiving. Nancy Vendrely called me last night and talked for an hour. It seems Erving had problems all summer long and finally went to a specialist who put in a permanent catheter. He finally got worse and worse and they did prostate surgery.

Seems he was allergic to some of the anesthetic and was very disoriented the 2 weeks in the hospital so Nancy got him into the Lutheran Nursing home. She brought him home yesterday and said he seems much stronger than he had been for a long time. She said they would be up after I get home from California. I had a nice note from Lynda Mohr (Hursh). and she is doing very well and has a nice home in New Haven.

I went to California again in Dec. 1996 with the usual problems.. After sitting on the runway in Fort Wayne they said there were engine problems and we were unloaded and waited for 5 hours for another plane. Which meant missed connections, chasing through 3 concourses in Chicago., landing in Los Angeles , and then being bussed to Ontario while Jim and Ruthann were driving into LA thinking I would still be there.. Finally Mark and Trevor rescued me at Ontario until Jim and Ruthann could return. Of course the luggage wasn't there and had to be delivered. Christmas was the family together and New Years we spent at Ann's in SanDiego.

We spent one day in Boron visiting the 20 Mule Team Borax museum. That was a great experience. We also played Canasta every night.

The trip home was no better than the arrival, due to weather in Chicago. Fortunately I have someone pushing me in a wheelchair , in the airport and out to the plane. They stay with me and It makes the long wait less boring and fearful.

I missed some playschool and other activities because of a cold and loss of voice.

My friend Theo died while I was in California. She was my canasta playing buddy and one of the first people I met after moving to Auburn. She and I were in a Thanksgiving play at the Heimach Center. She was living with her son in northern Michigan and was not too happy there.

Nancy and Ronda continue to take me shopping, clean my house and change my bed.. Without them and my dear neighbors, I couldn't manage. I am always so tired and cannot pass a chair without sitting down.

My friend the Red Cross director, Lucille Hardy, retired in January but continued as bloodmobile chairman. I talked to her on Wednesday and on Thursday morning she had a stroke. Her right side is paralyzed and her speech is very garbled. She is still in the hospital but I hope will soon be on the road to recovery.

Ellen Bates and her husband both had strokes just 24 hrs. apart. She was George's favorite nurse.

Charlie has been told that his cancer is all through his body so Nancy has a lot of worry and is not well herself. However, He keeps coming back after being told he will not live two weeks and goes to ballgames, etc.

Aunt Esther, George's sister died on April 28th. She was 99 years. I got to see her daughter Maxine from Florida whom I hadn't seen for many years.

Although I will miss the kids I have decided not to go back to nursery school this fall. I am so very tired most of the time and will do other things.

I went to the anniversary dinner at St. Peter's Lutheran church on Sept. 19, 1999. It was a beautiful day and 155 people came to the service. Many of them I didn't recognize, but they knew me. I couldn't believe I didn't recognize John (Stuffy) Dwyer, but he hugged me just like 20 years ago. Pastor Snyder was the only former pastor to attend. Jean Mumma, whose father was pastor when I joined the church in 1920 was there with her daughter. She is 98 yrs. old and was one grade ahead of George in high school. The service was great led by the head of the Ky-Ind synod. I was impressed with all of Ronda's boys who were in the processional, were acolytes, and helped with communion. Many memories returned as I saw the outside bulletin board that George and Jiggs Butler built many years ago, and many other things he had built. The maple trees George planted many years ago are large and beautiful. There were many pleasant memories of baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals.

Joyce and Everett brought Kathryn back for the day. She looked good, knew many folks but lives in a different world all of her own.

I've started working with kids in the first grade on their reading. I work one on one and that means no obedience problems. We had a lot of discipline problems in the nursery school.

Thanksgiving, 1998 was celebrated first at Linda Mohr's with all her family there. Then Jim and Ruthanna came from California, and we celebrated with the Fogle family at the town hall. Charlie came for a short while but told Ruthanna "they are putting me out to pasture"

A very important event occurred on Sun.Dec 5th. Little Charlie made his first communion and it was a very nice service. Marty and Ronda can be very proud of those sons. Casey assisted with communion, Corey was acolyte and Charlie carried the cross and banner with a Kraft boy. I was proud to be in attendance.

This will be the first time I have not made plans to go to California for Christmas. I decorated the house and porch so it looks like Christmas. I had a large window wreath won at the Evening Star party. Betty Dilgard drove me around after the party to see the lights. Ron Dickie's home was an elaborate, beautiful display. They must have strung lights for a month. I went to Nancy's Christmas eve and began to chill and really didn't feel like it but went to the hall for Christmas day. I didn't go out of the house for the next week.

Charlie died on Jan.24,1999. They didn't want to tell me on the phone so Marty and Ronda came up that evening and told me. The funeral was on Thurs. the 27th and then everything went to pot for me.

I was trying to unlock the back door when I stubbed my toe and fell very hard , hitting my head on the cement. I got up and said to Dortha "I'm ok" and went on in. I saw a lump on my forehead and put ice on it. In a few minutes , it was as large as a duck egg so I hurried next door and Jess and Butch took me to the emergency room. Dr. Hathaway was there in a few minutes. Butch called Nancy and soon the whole family was around.. I stayed in the hospital for three days, then at Tonda's for one night, and Ronda's for three days. I was black and blue even down my neck because of the Coumadin and my forehead was swollen. Dr. Hathaway drained it after a few days and I wore a sock cap night and day for weeks. The cap I will now donate to charity.

Ruthanna is pushing hard for me to come to California and I guess I'll have to give in and go by June 1st. I don't want to leave Indiana, but I couldn't live here now if Davey's kids and my neighbors weren't so kind to me. I don't want to ride a good horse to death. I have consented to the move and will dispose of all my furniture, gifts, spoons and unused clothing. Nancy will get the old fashioned stand in the north window. An old barber in Grabill gave it to our family and it survived it our 1920 house fire. Davey and Nancy had it refinished for us and Ruthanna wants Nancy to have it to keep in the family. Other things will be doled out to family and friends to remember me by. The apartment owner bought a lot of the furniture.

Since this will be my last election here I plan to work on the election board. However there is not much to vote for as the presidential candidates are already chosen by many states.

Warren Fitch died Monday evening. Tonda, Nancy and I will go to the funeral home tonight.

We managed to clear out the apartment--was eating on a card table and Ruthanna was sleeping on a folding lounge chair (Melba's) The Library hosted a farewell party for me on June 3rd. Guests came from all the agencies for whom I had volunteered. Rachel Roberts presented me with an autographed copy of her book "Auburn is a Dancing Lady". The library will dedicate future Ideals Magazines in my name. Dr. Hathaway and Dr. Morrow were both there. Jeanette Cherry and former pupils from the Playschool were there or sent messages. I'll never forget the party and the people.

On Sunday, Ronda hosted a family party for me. What a day filled with good wishes and pleasant memories.

We arrived in Riverside June 11, 2000 and this was to be my home. What a change, but I will try to make the best of it.

I have many friends in Indiana and I had plenty who left this world years ago and recently. Not all memories are pleasant but I cherish those that were. I usually can smile even though my heart is broken and filled with tears and sorrow. When I was young and people would ask me "how are you", I would answer "all right".. Then my dad would correct me by saying "No, you are not all right, you are half left"

I've slowed down lately, but I guess that's not news. I never go to bed at night without thanking God for my existence and His care. I do very little now--dust, make my bed, etc. My eyes are not too good but I use them until they get tired.

In the meantime, God Bless you and keep you in His care. and I'll keep you in my memories for ever.

